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English Classics for Indian Schools

THE MARCH OF THE TEN THOUSAND

RETOLD FROM THE "ANABASIS" OF XENOPHON

BY

ANTONY MARSDEN,
M. A., (Oxon)

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

464

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The March of the Ten Thousand

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NOTE:—

Since this is a Greek story, I have given the names of the gods as the Greeks spoke them. Nowadays, perhaps, they are better known by their Roman equivalents; here are the names in pairs:—

ZEUS—Roman Jupiter, the king of the gods.

ARTEMIS—Roman Diana, goddess of the moon and of hunting.

APOLLO—Brother of Artemis, bore the same name in both languages; he was the sun-god, patron of musicians and archers.

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The March of the Ten Thousand

CHAPTER I

In the days when the Persian Empire was at the height of its power, its kings lived in such splendour as we of to-day can hardly even imagine. Their rule was absolute, their word was life or death, they were revered as gods—indeed, with far more terror than many of the gods of that age inspired.

Such a king was Cyrus, who founded the Persian Empire in 559 B. C. and of whose exploits we read in the Bible, among other places. Such a king but still more magnificent in his display, was Darius, who ascended the throne of Cyrus in 521 B.C., after an interval when more than one weak ruler had undone some of Cyrus's work. If the pomp of Darius outshone that of Cyrus, it was because Darius by wise rule and firmness built up the Persian Empire to be even greater than the first king had left it. When he began to rule, a great part of the huge empire was in revolt, and Darius soon saw that government must

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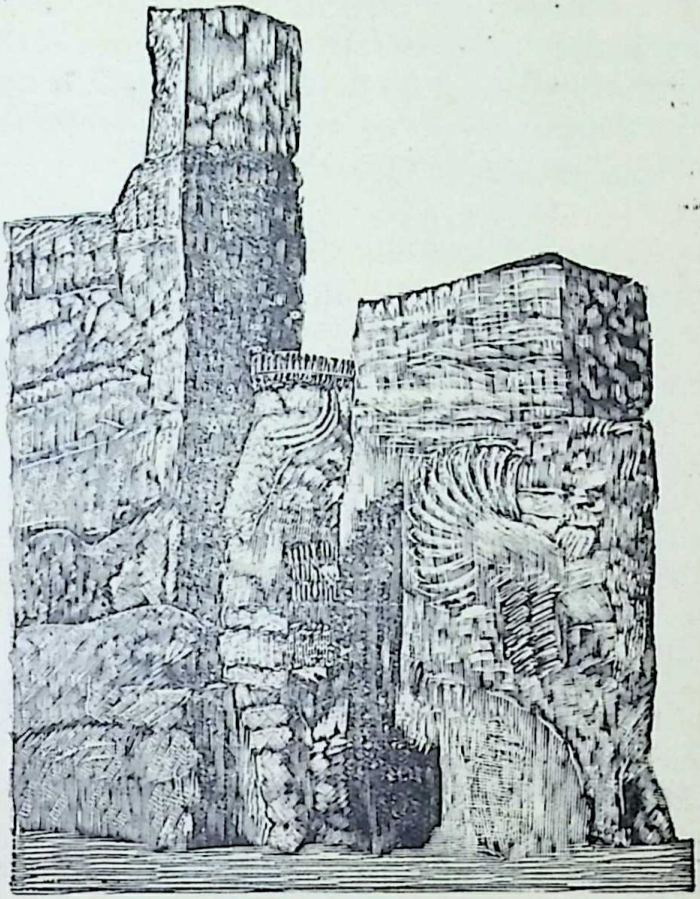
be better organised if the empire was to be kept together at all. His first step, therefore, was to divide the whole realm into twenty provinces, called Satrapies, which he had mapped and measured, so that he could know how much tax each province should justly yield him. The governors of these were called Satraps, and were responsible to the king, though in their own provinces their power was absolute. Thus was the king's authority entrusted to delegates—a system made necessary by the huge size of the empire: but a system full of dangers, as we shall presently see.

Darius did many other things, all tending to organise and centralize his government. From the great city of Susa in Media, the centre of his realm, he caused fine roads to be laid out to the very ends of the empire; and along these, relays of horses were kept ready always, that the king's messengers should be caused no delay. He issued a coinage of gold guineas, called Darics, which should be current everywhere. These measures, and many more, King Darius took because he realised that the vast size of his empire was in fact its most dangerous weakness. In those days of poor roads and no telegraph, so huge an empire



PERSEPOLIS—THE GREAT KING'S CAPITAL

(Note the ruined Gate with winged Bulls)

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might have been half lost by insurrection or treachery before the king had heard even a rumour of trouble. Darius safeguarded himself, to some extent, by having so good a postal system that news, which in other hands would take a hundred days to come to Susa from the west, was brought by his royal messengers in a week.

Even so, however, the Persian Empire was too vast to be controllable by a single man, even by so wise and powerful a king as Darius. The Satraps, who were themselves like kings of large countries, were too far away for Darius to watch them: and though he had a most intricate and cunning system of spies, he was really dependent on the loyalty of the Satraps themselves. In his own time the great Darius managed to make his system work fairy well; but we shall see how, when feebler rulers followed him, it began to break down.

It was still far from breaking down, however, in the year 490 B. C., when the King's armies sailed across the Aegean Sea to invade and subdue Greece. Indeed, the king had just successfully crushed a revolt of certain cities of his on the near side of the sea. Their inhabitants were Ionians, a branch of the Greeks ; and they had been helped (on account

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of this kinship) by troops and money from the mainland of Greece itself, and notably by the Athenians. It took the King six years to break the Ionian Revolt; and when he had broken it, his first thought was to proceed against the independent Greeks who had dared help his foes, and to teach them a terrible lesson. But this time, even the Great King had undertaken more than he could perform; for in the year 490 B. C. the Athenians, almost unaided, turned back the Persian hosts at the battle of Marathon, not far from their own city, and by so doing saved all Greece. There were 10,000 of the Greeks, and 100,000 of the Persians; and the battle which they fought, on account not only of its odds but of the issues at stake, is still one of the most famous in all history.

CHAPTER II

Ten thousand Greeks!

Are these, then, the ten thousand of whose march we are presently to tell? They are not, the numbers are a mere coincidence; nor was it till nearly ninety years from this time, that the ten thousand under Xenophon won their undying fame. But the spirit which urged them on was like that of their forefathers

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(Xenophon himself was an Athenian, and so were many of his troops); and we shall understand the second adventure better if we recognise in it, flashing out at frequent intervals, the same proud independence which inspired the first. Did Persia find the first ten thousand a formidable foe? She found the second ten thousand no less so. Had the first little army cause to fear and hate the Great King—"*The* King," as all Greece called him, since no other was so great as he? The second had almost equal cause, and suffered more grievously. Did the first army win by sheer stubborn heroism? If ever stubborn heroes proved their worth, those of the little army of Xenophon did. So there is something worth examining in the coincidence, after all. But meanwhile we must go back to King Darius and see what befell him and his empire, after the Greeks had proved at Marathon that to invade them was a task which even The King might fail to accomplish.

Darius died in 485 B.C. And his successor Xerxes, ten years after Marathon, came against Greece again with a host ten times as great as that which Darius had sent. It was a million strong. Xerxes himself rode in command of it. And when it crossed the

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Hellespont (which we now call the Dardanelles) on two bridges of boats, its passage took seven days and nights. It marched towards Greece round the north shore of the Aegean, and the Greek states were in despair.

Yet even now the king was not destined to succeed. His first advance was held up by a small force of Spartans at the pass of Thermopylae. Soon afterwards, his huge fleet was shamefully beaten by the combined Greek fleets off the Island of Salamis, near Athens. And though his forces were so great that he still far outnumbered his foes, Xerxes lost heart altogether at such disasters, and resolved to return to Asia before the Greeks should destroy the bridges of boats which he had left behind him. He left 300,000 of his choicest troops in Greece under one of his generals ; but at the battle of Plataea, next summer, this force was faced and routed. And on the very same day, on the other side of the Aegean, the King's fleet was destroyed at Mykale, in a great battle which freed the Ionian cities also from the Persian yoke. And thus the Greeks on both sides of the sea got rid of the King together.

Fourteen years later Xerxes met his death being assassinated by one of his own followers.

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He was followed by Artaxerxes (465-425), whose successor in turn was Darius II (425-405). What happened in Greece meanwhile has little to do with this history; freed from the fear of Persia, the Greek states were maintaining their own dominions, planting fresh colonies in the Mediterranean, and from time to time warring among themselves. So that Greeks do not enter this story again till after 405 B.C., when the death of Darius II began a new and troublous chapter of Persian history; and the cause of their re-entry was the ambition of a Persian prince, named Cyrus.

CHAPTER III

Darius II was still known as The King, and his state seemed as mighty as before. But since the great days of the empire under Darius I things had changed. The King's posts were as swift as ever: his spies increased year by year: he had a secret-service agency with power to question travellers on the roads, and even to scrutinize the letters they carried: his Satraps were watched by those whom they believed their most intimate friends, and their words carried to the palace at Susa: the King never showed himself outdoors, unless surrounded by his ten thousand guards: no one

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whom he received was allowed near his person, and he had officers to taste before him every dish that he ate. Yet for all this, he lived in constant fear—fear of assassination such as had befallen his grandfather: fear of the break-up and revolt of his huge realm, which he knew to be too unwieldy for his management, and already rotten with treachery and intrigue.

In his own home, whether he was aware of it or not, the King might have perceived the seeds of much future trouble. He had had thirteen children by his queen, the beautiful Parysatis, but at the time of which we speak these had mostly died. Only two sons, in fact, survived with a difference of thirty years between them. The elder was named Artaxerxes after his grandfather: the younger, Cyrus, after that famous Cyrus who had founded the Persian empire, a hundred and fifty years before. The natural heir to the throne of Darius was the elder, Artaxerxes: but since the Power of the King was absolute, there was nothing to prevent him naming a younger son as heir if he so wished. Queen Parysatis loved Cyrus far better than his brother, and her ambition was to persuade the King to make Cyrus heir.

There were good reasons for this, apart from the queen's preference. Artaxerxes was

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weak and luxurious, living idly at his father's court and hating any active work or exercise. Cyrus, on the other hand, far more resembled the ideal of a Persian noble of the old days, before the spirit of that great empire had begun to decline. He could run and ride; he was as good as any of his subjects with the spear or the bow, and better than most; he sought danger rather than luxury; and he could drink enormous quantities of wine without getting drunk—a feat which in Persian eyes proved the drinker's manliness. In actual war and government, too, the young man had already shewn his worth; for he had been a Satrap since the age of eighteen, and had both ruled his province and led troops with notable success.

These things being so, it was no wonder that young Cyrus had many friends. He seems, in fact, to have been one of those who have a genius for friendship; all sorts of men were attracted by him—not merely Persians, who might have feigned to like him for his father's sake, but foreign travellers and ambassadors as well. He was both generous and swift to reward services: he always kept his word (a quality none too common among the ancient Persians and Greeks): and he never failed a friend, though if a friend of his

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proved treacherous he was ruthless in vengeance. And this power which Cyrus had, of making and keeping friends, was above all to stand him in good stead when he embarked on his great adventure.

Had the King's subjects been allowed to choose their prince, it is most probable that young Cyrus would have succeeded Darius on the throne. However, in Persia the King's wish was absolute; and despite all that Queen Parysatis could do, the King's choice fell on the elder brother. Dying, the King had summoned both his sons; and when Cyrus arrived from his distant province with his bodyguard of three hundred Greeks, he must have been full of hope. When the King's choice was made, the young man's impetuous nature took too little care to hide his disappointment; and no sooner was Artaxerxes on the throne than the Satrap Tissaphernes, who had pretended to be Cyrus's intimate friend, went to the new King with a story that Cyrus was plotting to have him murdered.

This tale might well have ended Cyrus's hopes and life then and there, but for the influence of the queen-mother. No one else dared to speak for him, in face of Artaxerxes' first resolve to put his young brother to death.

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But the queen pleaded so successfully that Artaxerxes, who was weak and good-natured where his mother was concerned, not only put aside his suspicion of Cyrus but even allowed him to resume his satrapy and to go back to Sardis.

So to his province the young man returned, full of bitter resentment; and whether Tissaphernes' story had been true, or only the result of jealousy, there is no doubt that from this time Cyrus had but one thought. Other Satraps had schemed against the King to increase their power in their own provinces, or to add to their private wealth; Cyrus aimed higher still, and was content with nothing less than to supplant his brother Artaxerxes and to make himself King.

CHAPTER IV

To anyone less resolute than Cyrus, this might have seemed a hopeless task. The King could still put a million men into the field to do battle for him, whereas a Satrap such as Cyrus could count on no more than a hundred thousand. On the other hand the old disadvantage of the empire, its unwieldy size, still told against it. The King would

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need at least a year to prepare his hosts; and when they were prepared, they were by no means all to be trusted in battle. It was quite common for regiments of the King to need driving forward with whips, so discontented had they grown in the service of a king who was so harsh a tyrant. Cyrus would have the advantage of beginning the attack when he chose; and though his force would be less, it would be far more reliable, and might take the other side by surprise. It was moreover stiffened by a large number of Greek mercenaries—trained fighters, ready to follow anyone who could lead them and pay them well. The Greeks, as all the world was well aware, had been a match for Persians at stupendous odds in the old days, and might prove so again. The Greeks, too, were always ready for adventure, and a forlorn hope such as this was just the sort of enterprise which appealed to them and brought out their best fighting qualities. Above all, there was the personality of Cyrus himself as leader—Cyrus, the honourable prince who was far-famed as a staunch friend and able leader, and who had won the confidence and sympathy of all those with whom he came in contact.

Nor did the young man trust in the Greeks alone. He had his mother Parysatis

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away at the capital, scheming and watching all the while on her son's behalf. He had his high position as Satrap of a great province; and whenever messengers from court came to visit him, he used his pleasant manners to make friends of them, and seldom let them go till he had won them to think at least as highly of him as they did of the King himself. He also spent much time and skill on the training of his Persian troops, whom he was building up into a force both more efficient than the King's other troops, and far more loyal to him than the rest of the army was to King Artaxerxes. With his Greek soldiers he had to proceed more carefully; for it was needful above all that his fellow-satraps should have no suspicion of his design in raising an army of foreigners. And here he used his cunning; he sent orders to the captains of all his garrisons up and down the province, that they should hire as many Greek soldiers as they could, in the pretence that his neighbour Tissaphernes meant to make war against him. There was a good excuse, moreover, for such an alarm; for the Ionian cities of the province had belonged to Tissaphernes' province at first, and had revolted to Cyrus. It was quite natural that Tissaphernes should want to win them back; and when Miletus, Tissaphernes'

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one remaining Ionian city, wished to join Cyrus too, Tissaphernes put some of their chief men to death and sent others into banishment. This gave Cyrus his chance; he received the exiles from Miletus kindly, and sent a request to the King that, as the cities of Tissaphernes were discontented, they should be given over to himself. The King, all unsuspecting, agreed to this; he did not care who ruled the cities in question, so long as their tribute came to him; and as Cyrus took care to send the tribute regularly, he soon had his way.

Another force was being raised for Cyrus across the Hellespont, in the following way. He had a friend there called Clearchus, a Spartan, whom he had won by making him a present of a thousand darics: Clearchus spent a good deal of this money on troops, which he used for a while in wars against Sparta's enemies; but Cyrus knew that these same troops would be available for his own use by and by.

He had another friend, too, in those parts—Aristippus of Thessaly. Aristippus had come to him some time ago, when he was hard pressed by enemies, asking the loan of two thousand troops and three months' pay for

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them. Cyrus at once supplied four thousand men and six months' pay, asking Aristippus not to end his war without letting him know. And in this way he had another secret army maintained for him, till he should need it himself.

Lastly, he asked three other friends of his to join him in Asia with as many men as they could bring; stating to one that he intended to make war on Pisidia, and to the others that he must protect the people of Miletus against their old foe Tissaphernes. And these friends also did as Cyrus wished.

CHAPTER V

It may seem strange that Cyrus, while governing one of the King's provinces, should be allowed to make open war on a fellow-satrap such as Tissaphernes, or to announce his intention of invading a third province of the King's, Pisidia. But as a matter of fact, the King had seldom any objection to such quarrels between governors; quarrels prevented any one governor from growing too strong, or any group of governors from combining against the King himself; so that, so long as the tribute of the provinces did not

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fail (and Cyrus took care to send home the tribute of the cities he coveted, even before they were his) the Great King would rather prefer his satraps to quarrel than to enjoy too much peace.

Cyrus therefore, was doing nothing to rouse the King's suspicions when he kept training and collecting troops for a war, which was already in progress against Tissaphernes. As for a war against Pisidia, that also might seem natural enough, since the Pisidians were mostly mountain-brigands, to suppress whom would be to confer a benefit on all the western end of the empire. Lastly though Cyrus like all the satraps was constantly spied on, his bounty and charming ways disarmed the spies' suspicions and won them to Cyrus's side as we have seen; so that however many reports went home from Cyrus's capital, Sardis, there was never a word to cause any real anxiety to the distant King.

In this way Cyrus continued for three years after his return from Susa, both improving his native army, and confirming secret alliances with the Greek captains mentioned above. At last, in the early spring of 401 B. C., he deemed that the time was ripe. His own troops he had already in Sardis with him,

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and in a very short time the messages which he sent out brought the Greeks—Clearchus with his Spartans from over the Hellespont, Aristippus from Thessaly, and his three other friends from Boeotia, Achaea and Arcadia, with as many adventurers as they could muster. Clearchus, Cyrus's intimate friend, knew already what the prince had in mind; but from the rest the object of the armament was kept hidden—partly for fear of warning the Great King, but even more because if the Greeks had known that Cyrus was bound for Susa, they might have been unwilling to venture their lives on so forlorn a hope, and so far from their own country. So to the army in general it was given out that Cyrus intended to subdue Pisidia.

So far, we have been mentioning names of towns and countries without stopping to explain where they lay. The persons of our story, rather than their route, have been our chief concern. Now, if we want to understand how great was this enterprise, let us leave Cyrus for awhile in his huge camp outside Sardis, and take a good look at our map.

Sardis, the starting-point, is easily found. It is the capital of the King's province of Lydia in Asia Minor, less than fifty miles from the sea. Miletus, and the other Ionian cities, lie

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along the coast. Clearchus came from farther north, from the Greek side of the Hellespont; and you will find the countries of the other Greeks—Thessaly, Attica, Boeotia, Achaea and Arcadia—farther westward still, in the mainland of Greece itself.

Pisidia, to which the expedition was supposed to be going, is a province of Asia Minor not too far from Cyrus's own satrapy—eastward from Sardis less than two hundred miles. But for Susa, the Great King's capital and Cyrus's real objective, you must look farther eastward still—eastward for more than sixteen hundred miles, indeed, from the Lydian coast, to the head of the Persian Gulf. Even there, you are but halfway over the full width of the Great King's realm. For the old Persian Empire stretched as far as India itself, across the river Indus; southward to all the coast that runs from the Indus-mouth to the head of the Gulf, and to the deserts of Arabia; north, to a line drawn eastward from the south shore of the Black Sea; even Egypt was part of it. In fact, except for Greece itself and some Greek colonies on the shores of Italy, the Great King could boast that he owned the whole world, so far as it was then known! This was the empire which Prince Cyrus set out to conquer.

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CHAPTER VI

Now to return to Cyrus's camp, where he had mustered Asiatic troops to the number of a hundred thousand, and about fourteen thousand Greeks. It is with this Greek army that we are chiefly concerned ; had they not gone with Cyrus, we should know very little of the great adventure beyond the bare fact that it occurred. But the story is told in full, as it unrolled itself to the Greeks themselves, by a certain Xenophon who went with them, and who afterwards wrote out all their adventures in a history. It is known, generally, as "The March of the Ten Thousand;" for although fourteen thousand Greeks set out from Sardis, only eight thousand saw their homes again. Xenophon marched with them from first to last, and indeed led them for the greater part of the homeward way; yet curiously enough, this young Athenian had not joined the expedition as a soldier at all, much less as a general, having gone merely as the friend of one of the officers. The young traveller found more and stranger adventures than he had ever guessed at, or had ever desired ; but it proved lucky for the Greeks that chance sent him along with them.

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In spring, then, Cyrus held a great review of his troops, and so took the road for Pisidia. Few knew his secret aim—very likely none, save Clearchus and himself. Yet there was one who guessed it. Cyrus's old enemy Tissaphernes, who had denounced him to Artaxerxes three years ago, watched from his neighbouring satrapy the vast preparations that were afoot, and was shrewd enough to see through the pretext of Pisidia and to guess Cyrus's real ambition. He hated Cyrus more than ever—not only having failed to ruin him in the eyes of the King, but having had to yield to him the Ionian cities; here was a chance to pay off the old score, and at the same time to win high favour at court. He took a body-guard of a few hundred cavalry, and set off at top speed to Susa to warn the King.

Meanwhile the march from Sardis had already begun. Cyrus commanded the whole force of a hundred and fourteen thousand; but the Asiatic troops were in charge of one Ariaeus, a Persian nobleman; while the Greeks followed, tribe by tribe, the different chiefs who had enlisted them. The pace was swift, despite the size of the host; in four days they had covered ninety miles, including the passage of the river Meander, and reached the

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province of Phrygia. They now halted for a week, and obtained reinforcements. Three more days saw them sixty miles farther on, at the city of Celaenae. Here Cyrus owned a palace, and a forest full of wild beasts where he had been used to hunt, through which the little river Marsyas ran, named after that Marsyas who had once challenged the God Apollo in a contest of music, and had been flayed alive by the God for his impudence. The army stayed here thirty days, received more reinforcements, and held a grand review. The Greeks were counted now, and were found to have reached with the reinforcements their full strength. More marching followed, varied by halts for games and for public sacrifices, between which the army was still travelling at the rate of twenty-two miles a day.

By this time three months' pay was due to the troops, who now began to flock round Cyrus's tent when a halt was made, demanding their money angrily. Cyrus put them off with promises; but he was clearly very much distressed, for it was not his habit to break faith, nor would he have done so now if he had had any money. Luck favoured him, however, in an unforeseen way. For while he

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camped in the plain of Caystrus, a great queen came to visit him. This was Epyaxa, wife of Syennesis King of Cilicia, who for the sake of meeting Cyrus had made a long journey with her bodyguard, and presented him with a large sum of gold. Some say that the Cilician queen was in love with Cyrus; whether this was so or not, her present saved him from a very awkward plight, and enabled him to pay his army's wages for four months.

Queen Epyaxa must have followed Cyrus's march for some time after this. For we next hear of her at Tyriaeum, sixty miles farther on, where Cyrus in gratitude arranged a review of his whole host in her honour. The Asiatic troops marched by in their usual manner; but when the Greeks' turn came, a curious event befell. Cyrus had ordered the Greek captains to dispose their men in the order in which they were accustomed to enter battle. On came the Greeks, splendid in brazen helmets, scarlet tunics, greaves and polished shields. When they were opposite to Cyrus and the queen, a trumpet rang out; and at once the Greeks moved towards the royal group at a run. It was their famous charge that they were showing Cyrus—a manoeuvre which started slowly, but increased

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gradually to full speed, with loud shouts of triumph. It was too real and terrifying for the queen, however; she and the Persian body-guard turned round and fled in panic, thinking the Greeks had mutinied and were charging in earnest. Meanwhile the Greeks, whose discipline was perfect, pulled up and lined themselves before the royal tents, shouting now with laughter at the success of their charge. Nor was Cyrus himself ill-pleased, when he saw what a panic they had inspired in the ranks of the Persian troops.

The army passed from Phrygia into Lycaonia, which they crossed in five days; and as the Lycaonians were not allies of his, he allowed the Greeks to ravage them, and thus to add still further to the pay which they had received.

Cyrus was now within a few days' march of the province of Cilicia, where the queen's husband ruled. There was no reason to expect the King Syennesis would welcome the invaders as his queen had done; for he was acting as a satrap of the Great King, and was in duty bound to prevent Cyrus from entering his country. There seems no doubt, however, that Queen Epyaxa had now turned against her husband and was on Cyrus's side;

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for the young prince entrusted to her some of his best troops, (a division of Greeks under Menon), and sent her forward by a shorter road over the hills, to enter Cilicia before him. He himself, seven days afterwards, marched on Cilicia with his main host.

There was but one main road into Cilicia called the Cilician Gates, a famous and rugged pass across the Taurus Mountains. It was so steep and narrow that a very few troops could have held up the largest army in the world there; and Cyrus found, as he had expected, that King Syennesis was camped on the heights above, ready to dispute his passage. Cyrus, however, had provided against this danger by equipping a fleet, which had sailed all the way round the Ionian coast and was already landing troops behind Syennesis in Cilicia. When the Cilician king heard this, his courage failed; not only was he taken in the rear by the men from the fleet, but his own queen (as he now learned) was not far off along the hills with her Greek division. So he withdrew, after a short delay, and let Cyrus march down unhindered into the Cilician plain. It may be that Syennesis himself had never been very anxious to oppose the invaders; it may even be that he had known what his queen was

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about, and had only pretended to dispute the pass. By camping above the Gates for those few days, he would be able to maintain to the Great King that he had done his best: whereas, if Cyrus conquered in the end, he could point out that he had never really opposed him.

Whatever his motives were, he soon made peace with the prince. Cyrus took Tarsus, Syennesis' capital, without trouble and plundered it. And not long afterwards, when the two leaders met, they exchanged costly presents and became good friends.

CHAPTER VII

Such was the kind of loyalty with which the Great King was served. And the Greeks now began to see that to march plundering through the Persian Empire was perhaps not so hopeless an adventure as they had once believed. At the same time they realised that they had long ago passed by Pisidia, which they had set out to attack; and the fact that Syennesis had resisted them, however feebly, proved that the expedition of Cyrus was not being made with the Great King's consent. They stayed in Tarsus twenty days; and it

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was about this time that they began to suspect Cyrus's real purpose. To make a raid upon a western province or two was no great matter, they thought; but to march far into the heart of the King's realm, and meet his mighty armies many hundreds of miles from their home, was more than they had bargained for. They grew suspicious and discontented, and when their own general Clearchus tried to force them to proceed, they broke out into open mutiny and pelted him with stones.

"We have come far enough," they shouted at him. "We are going home. You need not think we are such fools as to march on against the Great King himself!

When Clearchus heard this, he stood up alone before them silently, and the tears ran down his face. The Greeks were struck with wonder, because they had always known their general for a stern, hard man. Their surprise gave Clearchus the chance for which he had sought. In his own heart, he was resolved to support the prince to the utmost of his power; but he was cunning, and saw now that only by deceiving his countrymen could he win the day. Presently he began to speak.

"Soldiers," he said, "you must not wonder at my grief, for Cyrus has always been

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my friend. When I was exiled from my country, he honoured me not only with his favour, but with gifts of money. This money I never treasured for my use, nor squandered it in luxury; I spent it on you. For I made war upon the Thracians in the cause of Greece; and with your help, drove out the folk who would have stolen the land of Chersonese from its Greek colonists." The Greeks began to heed him now, for they knew this was true; Clearchus had served Greece well, and they could not deny it. Meanwhile Clearchus went on:

"When Cyrus summoned me, I led you to join him, that I might do him service in return for the benefits which we Greeks had received from him. But since you do not wish to follow him any farther, I am now forced to choose whether I shall be false to him or to you. Whether I shall choose rightly, I do not know. But I must choose to go with you, and to suffer with you whatsoever adventures may befall us. No one shall ever say of me that after leading Greeks into a foreign land I deserted them there, and preferred the friendship of foreigners!"

The Greeks now broke into applause, delighted to hear him say that he would not

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march against the Great King. Nor were his own division the only troops who had heard his speech; more than two thousand Greeks from other companies, deserting their own commanders, took up their arms and baggage forthwith and joined Clearchus' band.

It was not long before the news of the revolt reached Cyrus; who perplexed and grieved, sent for Clearchus to find out what had passed. Clearchus publicly refused to go; but in secret he sent a message to Cyrus, bidding him have no fear but that he would win the Greeks to his will. After which he called a second meeting of the troops, and addressed them as follows.

"We and Cyrus, soldiers, are now quit of each other: we are no longer his troops, nor he our paymaster. I know he thinks that we have wronged him, and that is why I am ashamed as well as afraid to go to him when he summons me. We must take thought now for our safety, whether we stay here or go; for he has troops and ships at his command, and though he is a splendid friend. he can also be a ruthless enemy. Let us decide at once what to do; and let who will, speak!"

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A number of Greeks now gave their views in turn; but several were secretly in league with Clearchus, and had been told by him what to say. One of these, pretending eagerness to return home at once, spoke as though he looked upon Clearchus as an enemy. "Let us choose other generals, if Clearchus will not lead us home. Let us buy food, and borrow from Cyrus either ships or a guide, to return by sea or land."

But the next speaker, also prompted by Clearchus, derided this plan. "What fools we are to think of asking ships or a guide from the very man whose leadership we have thrown off! I should be sorry to embark in any ship that he lent us, lest he should send us and the ships to the bottom together: or to trust any guide supplied by him, lest he should lead us into mortal danger. If we must leave this host without Cyrus's consent I had rather leave secretly: but that is not possible. I advise, therefore, that we go openly to Cyrus and ask for what purpose we are being used. If for some exploit such as Greeks have achieved before, then let us go with him lest we seem less brave than they; but if for some more dubious enterprise, then let us ask him either to satisfy us that he has

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good hope of success, or to send us home. Thus, whether we go or stay with him, we shall remain his friends."

This seemed the best way to the troops, so they sent deputies to Cyrus with Clearchus to enquire his plans.

"There is an enemy of mine" said Cyrus: "the satrap Abrocomas, on the banks of the river Euphrates, twelve days' march away. I mean to avenge myself on him, if he awaits my arrival; but if we find he has retreated, we shall have to consider there how to proceed."

This answer the deputies brought back; and though the soldiers still suspected that Cyrus might be leading them against the King, they decided to follow him. But they demanded higher pay. Cyrus agreed at once; and henceforth each Greek soldier drew three half-darics a month, instead of the daric which he had received formerly.

CHAPTER VIII

The twenty days at Tarsus drew to an end, and another five days' march brought Cyrus to Issus on the coast, the last city of Cilicia. (You will find Issus on the very

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north-east corner of the Mediterranean. It lay on the famous caravan-route which ran right through Asia Minor, crossing the Taurus Mountains by the Cilician Gates, then leading through another pass called the Amanic Gates into Syria; and it was later famous for a battle fought there in 333 B.C. by Alexander the Great, in which he overthrew the Persian Empire.)

The fine state of Cyrus's army may be judged by the speed of march which he still maintained and even increased; for in the last two days before he came to Issus, he covered forty-five miles. He was now only fifteen miles from the Amanic Gates, which Xenophon's accounts calls "The Gates of Cilicia and Syria." There were two forts here, with a river between; on the one side their walls ran down to the sea, and on the other were impassable mountains. There was little hope of forcing a way through, if the forts were held; so Cyrus once more trusted in his fleet, to land troops beyond the Gates on the coast of Syria.

The satrap Abrocomas should have been holding these forts, but when he heard that Cyrus was in Cilicia, he fell back to join the Great King with an army of three hundred thousand men. So once more Cyrus was

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allowed to advance by those who should have hindered him, though they outnumbered him by three to one.

Passing the Amanic Gates, Cyrus marched on into the Province of Syria and camped near the sea. There was a harbour here, with many merchant-ships; and while the army rested, two of the Greek generals called Xenias and Pasion made up their minds to go home. It is supposed that they were jealous, because Cyrus had let Clearchus keep those Greeks of the other companies who had changed over to his command at the time of the mutiny; at all events they hired a ship, put on her all the plunder which they had won, and sailed away.

The army naturally expected Cyrus to pursue them with his fleet, and to take vengeance. Cyrus however, summoning his captains, said: "Xenias and Pasion have left us. But though I know which way they have gone, and have ships that could overtake them, I shall let them go. No man shall ever say of me that I make use of him while he stays, only to rob and punish him if he desires to leave me. By the gods, let them go, with the knowledge that they have treated me less honourably than I treat them! I have their wives and children under guard, but they shall not lose

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even those; for I will send them back, in memory of the service which Xenias and Pasion once rendered me." Thus Cyrus spoke; and the Greeks, even those who had not wished to go on with him, followed him henceforth with more loyalty because they saw how noble his nature was.

Cyrus next turned inland and headed towards the river Euphrates, whiah was still twelve day's march away to the east. The Greeks were now in a land which few or none of them had ever entered before. The heat increased, and they beheld strange sights and customs entirely new to them. One river, the Chalus, they found full of large tame fish; the Syrians looked upon these as gods, and allowed no one to hurt either them or the pigeons which abounded there. The army camped in villages which belonged to Queen Parysatis, and where they were therefore welcomed. Five days later they came upon the palace of Belesys, the satrap of Syria, who had a wondrous garden full of all that the seasons produce; for the Persians were fond of gardening, and there were no grounds and parks like theirs in all the world. Cyrus himself was famous for the parks which he had planted in Lydia; but he laid Belesys' garden

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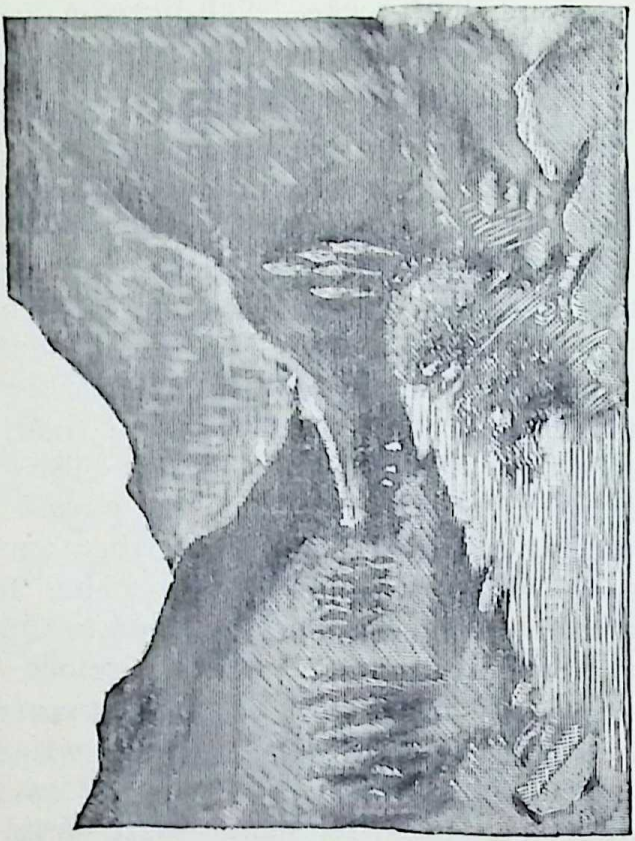
waste, all the same, and burned his great palace.



THE MESAPOTAMIAN REGION

So three days afterwards they reached the great river itself. Even there, so far above its mouth, the Euphrates was nearly half a mile in

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width, as Xenophon tells us. Cyrus halted in Thapsacus, a large city on its shores, and summoned the Greek captains.

You will remember he had told them first that he was marching against Pisidia. When they had left Pisidia far behind, at the time of the mutiny, he said his object was to fight Abrocomas on the Euphrates river. But now the Euphrates had been reached; and Cyrus told them bluntly that he was bound for Babylon, to supplant the Great King. He asked them to break this news to their own troops, and to persuade them to go on with him.

CHAPTER IX

You may imagine how dismayed the Greek soldiers were, when they heard the news. They were not altogether surprised perhaps, for the more shrewd of them had long suspected Cyrus's true ambition. But they were angry with their officers, saying that these had known what Cyrus had in mind all along, and had purposely deceived them. At first they flatly said they would march no farther; they could still manage, they supposed, to make their way back again

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to the Syrian coast, and thence by sea to Greece; if they went farther into Mesopotamia, and their enterprise failed, this hope would be lost. But as days passed, they realised that the obstacles which had prevented them from returning home after the mutiny were now greater still. So they gave their assent, unwillingly, and only on condition that their pay was once more increased. The generals took back this message to Cyrus, who replied with a generosity exceeding anything the soldiers had dreamed. On reaching Babylon, he said, each soldier should receive a sum of silver equal to more than thirteen times his month's pay; besides which, the pay itself should be continued until such time as he could bring them back to Ionia again.

Most of the Greeks found this proposal tempting enough to induce them to go on. But in the interval, while their decision was not yet made, the Greek general Menon mustered his own troops apart from the rest, and addressed them as follows:

"Soldiers, I have a plan by which you may win special honour and reward from Cyrus, at no risk to yourselves. Our comrades have not yet settled whether they will

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cross this great river at his request, Let us, while they are still debating, cross the river ourselves. If they decide to leave him and go back to Greece, we can at once re-cross the river and join them; but if they stay with Cyrus, we shall have won the credit of being the first to cross, and it may even be inferred that our example has confirmed the loyalty of the rest. You have seen with what lavish gratitude Cyrus rewards his friends; if he should wrest the throne from the Great King, be sure we shall not go unrepaid!"

It was not very honourable of Menon, thus to try and get the better of his fellow-Greeks by a trick. But the soldiers agreed at once, and were soon croosing the river. When Cyrus heard of it, he was much pleased, and sent a message to the troops. "I thank you, friends, and I shall take good care that you have cause to thank me; or think me no longer Cyrus!" To Menon he sent rich presents, and set out at once to lead the rest of the host across. And this day there befell something which put fresh heart into them all. The great river was usually too deep to be croossd, except by a bridge of boats; Abro-comas had burnt all the boats when he passed that way in retreat; yet when the troops

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of Cyrus waded in, they found that they could pass right through with the water no higher than their breasts. The men of Thapsacus cried out that this was a miracle, and that the river had made way for Cyrus as its future king.

Cyrus now marched along the river-bank for nine days, until he reached some villages stored with corn and wine. He stayed here three days collecting food for the host; for a great desert lay in front of them, eighteen days' march across, not counting such time as they might spend in resting. Xenophon calls this land Arabia, but he must have been misinformed, for the great river, he relates, was on their right as they marched, so that they must have been passing south-eastward through Mesapotamia.

The first five days of it were not too difficult. The land was as level as a sea, says Xenophon; and though it bore no trees, it was covered with shrubs which gave out a fragrant perfume. There were wild animals, which the horsemen tried to chase—wild asses, ostriches, bustards and antelopes. The wild asses' flesh was tenderer than venison; but they were swifter than the Persians' horses, and could be overtaken only if the hunters

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spread out all over the plain, so as to succeed one another with fresh horses till the quarry was tired out. The ostriches no one could catch, and the horsemen soon gave up trying; for they spread out their wings, says Xenophon, like sails, and so increased the speed of their running. The bustards were more easily bunted, for they could fly but a short way before they tired, like partridges; and their flesh was the tastiest of all.

On the fifth day they came to an oasis where was a city called Corsote, large but deserted. They stayed here three days, however, and replenished their provisions for the second and harder part of the desert-journey.

This was two hundred and seventy miles with neither grass nor trees; yet Cyrus covered it in thirteen days! It cost him many beasts, however, for they died of hunger; also the troops ran out of corn, and had to slaughter many more of the beasts for their own food. But Cyrus dared not allow the least delay; for he knew well that the more quickly he marched, the more unready would he find the Great King to meet him; and the more he delayed, the greater army would the Great King collect. Here again the huge size of the King's empire was a handicap to

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him; he had to summon troops from such vast distances, that a swift enemy might penetrate the very heart of his realm before they had all arrived.

Xenophon tells a story showing how eager was Cyrus's haste, and how zealous the obedience of his Persian nobles. Cyrus had halted with his suite at a spot where some waggons were stuck fast in a muddy part of the road; he thought the soldiers were too slow at dragging them free, and angrily ordered the noblest Persions of his suite to help them. At once those great lords threw off their purple cloaks where they stood, and rushed forward down the slope as though they were running a race; nor did they hesitate to leap into the mud in their embroidered clothes, with their bracelets and necklaces, and there to toil like common soldiers till in a few minutes the waggons were freed.

One day, as they passed through the endless desert, they saw a large and wealthy city; but it was on the other side of the great stream. There was no bridge, but they were in sore need of food aud were eager to cross. They therefore stitched the skins, with which they covered their tents, into large bags, and filled them with hay. On these they ferried

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themselves across, bought wine and corn, and carried them back in safety.

CHAPTER X

During this halt more trouble arose among the Greeks. Some soldiers of Menon's and Clearchus' divisions had quarrelled; Clearchus, judging them, found one of Menon's solders to be in the wrong, and had him beaten; and when the man returned to his own camp and told his comrades, they at once thought that Clearchus had shown undue favour to his own follower. On the same day Clearchus chanced to ride by Menon's camp with a few attendants; one of Menon's soldiers who was chopping wood saw him and threw his axe at him, but missed; others threw stones, and an ugly riot began. Clearchus saved himself by galloping off to his own camp, where he called out his troops and led them to attack Menon's quarters. A pitched battle was about to begin, when another leader, Proxenus, came by with an armed force and rode between the two lines. He begged Clearchus to desist. This only made Clearchus more indignant, that Proxenus should speak lightly of an attempt to stone him

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to death; and he bade Proxenus not to interfere. But at that moment Cyrus himself appeared, and asked what was the matter. Being told, he rode forward into the midst of the Greeks, and thus addressed them:

"Men of Greece, you know not what you do! Be sure, if you start quarrelling among yourselves, it will mean death to me at once, and to you soon afterwards; for you are the mainstay of our host, and if things go ill with us, my Asian troops will prove more deadly foes to us than even the King's armies!"

Thus by a compliment did Cyrus win the respect of the Greeks, and the quarrel was stayed. Nor was the prince's warning a mere piece of flattery; for the Greeks were indeed the flower of all this host, few though they were; and the Asiatics did not fail to observe with jealousy how highly Cyrus prized them.

As they advanced from there, an incident occurred which showed that their invasion might soon be challenged in earnest. Scouts came riding back with news that they had found the tracks of about two thousand cavalry, ahead of their line of march. These had been sent by the Great King to watch for Cyrus's approach, and retreat before him

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without fighting, burning all fodder and provisions such as Cyrus might hope to find on his way. At this point a Persian nobleman, Orontes, one of Cyrus's generals, propounded a plan.

"Give me a thousand cavalry" he said, "and I will either kill or capture in an ambush these marauding troops; that they may neither burn the fodder we need, nor tell the King we are coming."

Cyrus agreed, for though Orontes had once been his enemy, he had since joined his side and promised faithfully to help him. He therefore ordered cavalry to be given to Orontes; but as these were about to ride ahead of the host, a certain Persian came to Cyrus with a letter, which Orontes had given him to deliver secretly to the King.

"I have obtained the cavalry from Cyrus" the letter ran. "I will join you with them, if you will warn your outposts to receive us as friends. I also venture to remind your Majesty of my old loyalty to yourself, and of my enmity against Cyrus."

When Cyrus read these words, he called a council of his chief generals, of whom Clearchus was one, and ordered Orontes to be brought to him under guard.

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"I have summoned you, my friends," he said, "that after taking your advice I may do to Orontes, here, whatever may be thought just before gods and men. In the old days my father made him my subject. Later, to please my brother Artaxerxes, he made war against me; but after I had conquered him, our hands met in friendship. Since then," he went on, turning to Orontes, "have I wronged you in any way?"

"No, prince, you have not."

"You admit that. Yet, later, you went over to the Mysians and did all the harm you could to my lands?"

"I did," the wretched man had to confess.

"Later, again, you met me at the altar of the goddess Artemis to profess your repentance? You begged forgiveness, and we exchanged pledges of mutual faith?"

"We did."

"What harm, then, have I done to you, that you are now for the third time found treacherous?"

"You have done me no harm at all."

"And would you yet desert my brother, and return once more to my side?" asked Cyrus curiously. But the traitor hung his head.

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"If I did, Cyrus, you would never trust me again!"

Cyrus turned to the rest, "You hear what this man has confessed. Tell me what you think right — you, Clearchus, first."

"I counsel, that he be put out of the way with all speed; then we shall no more need to be on our guard against him."

The others agreed. One by one they rose, and touched Orontes' belt, which was the Persian sign that he was to suffer death. He was then led away by guards; and since, though treacherous, he was of noble birth, all those who saw him pass bowed low as they were wont to do, even though they knew that he was going to his punishment.

They saw him led into the tent of Artapatas, captain of Cyrus's body-guard. What form of death was waiting for him there no one ever knew; but he never came out again.

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CHAPTER XI

Cyrus now entered Babylonia. If you look at your map again, you will see that this province begins a little to the north of the point where the two rivers Tigris and Euphrates bend towards each other. Lower down, they separate again, and run apart for several hundred miles before they meet near the Gulf. But at the northern point, where modern Bagdad stands, there is no more than twenty or thirty miles between them. Cyrus, still having the Euphrates on his right, had to march through this narrow neck of land; and it was here that he expected the King's host to meet him, on its way north from Babylon. He was going more slowly now, and took three days to march through the first thirty-six miles of the province. At midnight after the third day he halted and drew up all his troops in battle order, for he had every reason to believe that the King would appear at day-light.

Let us halt here with him, and see what kind of troops were massed before him on that torchlit plain. The flower of the Persian regiments were the cavalry; they were fine horsemen, armed with long bows, and could shoot arrows at full gallop no less skilfully

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than if they were standing on the ground. They were of excellant service, then, in sudden raiding attacks, or in pursuing a rout; but they were less reliable when hard pressed than the Greeks' heavy infantry, and showed less courage and endurance.

The Greeks, who had no cavalry at all, were mostly heavily-equipped men-at-arms. They wore a helmet, breast-plate and metal greaves, or leg-guards, and carried also a huge shield which covered them from the face to the ground, and was so heavy that on the march it must be slung on the soldier's back by a thong of leather. Their spears were seven or eight feet long, and they had short swords too. Among the Greeks were also some light-armed infantry, whose only weapon of defence was a small shield, and of attack a lance, a bow or a sling.

When Cyrus's host was marching four abreast, it formed a column nearly eight miles long. And even that did not include the herds of animals for baggage or food; nor the great straggling crowd of travelling merchants and store-keepers, who in those days followed close behind an army in the field, and sold their supplies to them; nor the troops' slaves and servants who attended to their wants on

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the march, though they were not employed in the fighting.

And yet this host of Cyrus was outnumbered, possibly by ten to one, by the massed armies which the Great King might expect to muster. Nothing betrays more clearly how corrupt and rotten the great empire was, than the fact that Cyrus had been allowed to come so far without any serious fighting. But there was fighting to be done ere long, as every soldier knew; and that night, the prince called a council of the Greek generals, and advised them what kind of battle they must shortly expect.

"It was no lack of troops of my own race," he began, "that made me ask you to come with me. Rather it was because I knew you to be better fighters than any multitude of the East. See, then, that you prove worthy of the liberty which you enjoy, and for which I envy you; for believe me, your liberty has always seemed to me a better thing than all the wealth I possess. Now, from my own experience of Persian war, I will explain to you what sort of fighting this is likely to be. The enemy's numbers will be huge, and they will charge with a shout; but if you stand firm—why, I feel shame to tell you what

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unworthy foes you will find them! If you prove true and brave, moreover, I will send those of you who wish back to Greece so rich, that all your friends will envy you; though I think most of you will prefer to stay here in my service.

At this, a Greek exile from the isle of Samos got up, being in Cyrus's confidence. "Cyrus," said he, "you make fair promises today in the hour of danger; yet if we win you may not remember them—or if you remember, may not have the means to reward us all."

But Cyrus at once replied: "My brother's empire, friends, runs southward to lands where men cannot live for heat, northward to lands where men cannot live for cold; and over all that lies between, my brother's friends are now satraps. If we win, shall not all those lands be ruled by *my* friends? I have no fear of lacking prizes great enough to reward you all; rather, I fear that I shall not have friends enough to receive them! And to each of you Greeks, beside, I will give a crown of gold."

When the Greek generals told their men this news all were filled with joy. But his friends begged Cyrus not to go into the battle himself, but to direct it from behind the line.

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Cyrus would not consent to this. It was about the same time, too, that he answered a question of Clearchus. "Do you think, Cyrus," the Greek leader asked, "that your brother intends to fight?"

"By Zeus," the prince exclaimed, "if he be truly Darius' and Parysatis' son, I shall not win this realm from him without bloodshed!"

News of the enemy now began to arrive, through men who had deserted the Great King to join Cyrus's army. He had one million and two hundred thousand infantry, they said, with two hundred scythed chariots and six thousand cavalry; but of this number only nine hundred thousand were in the field; for the satrap Abrocomas, marching from the Mediterranean coast, did not arrive till five days after the battle was fought.

At dawn the prince moved forward about nine miles, marching in battle array, for he expected that the King would give battle immediately. The King however, did not appear: though as they marched they came upon a gigantic trench which his troops had recently made. Its depth was eighteen feet and its width thirty. It had been dug for a defence, no doubt, when the King heard how close Cyrus's army was. But it was not

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defended now, and when they had crossed it Cyrus's men found tracks of many troops and horses in retreat. That day Cyrus sent for a Greek prophet named Silanus and gave him three thousand darics; he had foretold, eleven days ago, that there would be no battle for ten days. "Unless he fights within that time, the King will not fight at all!" Cyrus had exclaimed; so saying, he promised Silanus a reward if his words came true, and now kept his promise.

And indeed, the King's failure to defend the trench made Cyrus almost think that his brother did not mean to oppose him. Next day the army marched less cautiously; the day after, Cyrus rode at ease in his chariot, and a great number of the soldiers let their arms be borne by the waggons and beasts of burden. They were too confident, however; before noon the vanguard saw one of Cyrus's staff come galloping back at full speed; he stopped for no one; but as he passed the lines of troops he kept crying out, in Persian and in Greek:

"The King! The King is coming with his host, in battle array!"

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CHAPTER XII

Confusion followed then, for the whole army thought the King would fall on them instantly, before they could form their ranks. Cyrus himself leapt from his chariot and put on his armour; then, calling for his horse, gave orders for all the rest to arm themselves and take their appointed places. They lost no time, you may be sure, in forming their battle-array, the troops being disposed as follows.

Clearchus led the end of the right wing, close by the river-bank. The next was Proxenus, and after him the other generals of the Greeks in order. Menon and his troops formed the left of the Greeks.

Next stood the Asian regiments. A thousand Paphlagonians were on the right wing near Clearchus; but the left wing was formed of Asian troops alone, under the chief of Cyrus's generals, Ariaeus.

Cyrus himself was in the centre, with six hundred horsemen for bodyguard. These were all armed with breastplates, thighpieces and helmets, except Cyrus alone, who entered battle with his head bare. Even the horses wore defensive armour on the forehead and breast; and their riders had Greek swords.

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It was now mid-day, and the enemy had not yet come in sight. But in the early afternoon a dust appeared—"like a white cloud," says Xenophon, "and not long after, a sort of blackness, stretching far over the plain." As the King's host drew near, the gleam of brazen armour could be seen through the dust, and the spear-heads and lines of helmets were visible.

Soon the Greeks saw before them, on the enemy's left, a body of cavalry in white armour, which the satrap Tissaphernes was rumoured to command. Near these were troops with shields of wicker-work; and next to them, heavy infantry with wooden shields which reached to their feet; these the Greeks thought to be Egyptians; and there were more cavalry and archers besides. All these troops marched according to their tribes, in oblongs of close-packed men.

In front of them, spaced out at intervals, were the scythed chariots of the King with long knives on their axle-trees, and more underneath; these knives were meant to cut through anything that came in their way, and the King hoped to use his chariots to sunder the ranks of the Greeks.

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Cyrus had warned the Greeks to be prepared against the dreadful shout of the enemy. But in this he had been mistaken; for the King's host was advancing in dead silence, steadily, with a slow even step. Cyrus meanwhile rode by with an interpreter, and called out to Clearchus to lead the Greeks against the enemy's centre, where the Great King would be. "If we win there," he cried, "the day is ours." But though Clearchus heard what the prince said, he was not persuaded. The King's host was so much greater than their own, that its centre was well beyond Cyrus's left wing; and if Clearchus should move that way, he feared that his own right wing would be detached from the river-bank, and be hemmed in on both sides. So he called out in answer merely that he would take care that all should be well.

Meanwhile, the King's battle-line was slowly advancing, and the Greek troops stayed where they were on the wing. Cyrus rode on down the long lane between the armies, inspecting both. It is at this point that our author, Xenophon, first mentions himself. He recognised the prince as he rode by, went out to meet him, and asked if he had any commands. But Cyrus merely asked him, to

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tell everyone that the omens were good. While they spoke, Cyrus heard a strange murmur pass along the Greek lines, and asked Xenophon what it was.

"It is the watchword," Xenophon replied, "which is being passed along for the second time." For the Greek custom was to circulate a watchword on the morning of battle, so that in case the battle lasted into the night, they might know each other from the enemy.

"What *is* the watchword?" Cyrus asked, wondering.

"ZEUS THE SAVIOUR, AND VICTORY," Xenophon answered him.

"I accept that as a good omen," Cyrus said. "May it turn out so!" With these words he rode off to his own post; and the two hosts were now not more than half a mile apart, when the Greeks sang their battle-hymn and began to move forward.

As it advanced, the long line swayed like a wave, and those who were left a little behind began running. Then they all raised a shout to the god of War, as the Greek custom was; and next moment, the whole Greek army was running. Some say they rattled their spears against their shields, to frighten the enemy's horses. But there was

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little need for that. Before an arrow could reach them, the Persian left wing shrank back, and took to flight. The Greeks pursued them in full force; yet as they advanced, word was passed calmly down their lines that they should not run, but follow in steady order. The Persian drivers had abandoned their chariots; and now these were dashing, some through the jostling crowd of the Persians themselves, some through the advancing Greeks; but the Greeks made lanes through their ranks as the chariots came, and let them pass harmlessly. Here and there men were taken unawares by them, as might happen on a race course. But none were badly injured; nor was there any harm at all inflicted on any of the Greeks, except for one single soldier on the left of their line who was reported to have been hit by an arrow.

From his place in the centre, Cyrus could behold the triumph of the Greeks. Great was his joy and that of those about him, who were already beginning to salute him as King. He must have joined in the pursuit; but in that case he must have left the Great King's centre untouched, and he knew well that in the centre would his brother be found. For Persian generals

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always entered battle in the centre of their troops—partly for their own greater safety, partly because they could thus send out orders more easily to each wing. The Great King had followed this custom; but his host was so huge, that its centre was outside Cyrus's left wing; so Cyrus, keeping his own bodyguard of six hundred horsemen close round him, watched keenly to see what Artaxerxes would do. Meanwhile the latter, finding that only his left wing was attacked, began to wheel round with his centre and right, to encircle his enemies and pen them against the river. Cyrus foresaw that this enflanking movement might take the Greeks in the rear and destroy them; he therefore moved directly towards the King, charging with his six hundred horsemen and routing the bodyguard of six thousand who preceded the royal suite. With his own hand he is said to have killed their leader Artagerses; they fled, and Cyrus's six hundred soon became dispersed in pursuit.

Cyrus was now supported only by those chosen few who were called the Partakers of his Table—nobles whose duty was to remain in constant attendance on him. Pressing forward with these, he suddenly saw

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the King in the midst of his own suite. His rash courage proved too much for him. "I see the man!" he cried; and spurring forward, hurled one of his javelins at him with such force that it pierced through his breastplate. The King was wounded, and many of his bodyguard were slain outright. But there was one who hurled a javelin against Cyrus even as he launched his blow. It struck the prince below the eye, and down he fell from his horse, mortally hurt. Artapates, most faithful of all his suite, is said to have leapt down from his own horse when he saw Cyrus fall, and to have covered him with his body. Some say the King's men killed him as he lay there; others, that he killed himself when he found Cyrus dead. For the great prince lay lifeless on the ground, with eight of his chief nobles slaughtered around him.

CHAPTER XIII

Such was the end of Cyrus—a man who, Xenophon says, was the most princely of all Persians since that elder Cyrus who had founded the empire: a good friend, a relentless enemy, a just ruler in peace, and a great leader in war. No general, thought Xenophon, had ever been more greatly beloved by his troops, both

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Greeks and Asians. Of which the proof is this: no follower ever deserted Cyrus for the King, except Orontes alone, and even Orontes found that the messenger whom he most trusted was more faithful to Cyrus than to himself; whereas from the King's side many deserted to Cyrus, even of those who were supposed to be most loyal. In death, as in his life, he was served faithfully; for his chief men all fell with him, except Ariaeus, who had been posted far on the left wing in command of the cavalry, and who, when he heard that Cyrus had been killed, gathered his troops and fled.

Thus the Great King was left in possession of the field. He had the head and right hand of Cyrus cut off to show in proof of his victory. The troops of Ariaeus had fallen back on their camp; but when the King's troops followed them, they left the camp to be despoiled and fled away towards the place where they had lain during the previous night, twelve miles to their rear. The King now heard from Tissaphernes how his left wing had been routed by the Greeks, and how both parties had now disappeared from the field, pursued and pursuing. He reformed his army, and set out to find news of them.

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By this time the Greeks had chased their foes for nearly four miles, and had paused for breath when a rumour reached them that the King was among their baggage. Clearchus called to Proxenus, whose troops were next to his, asking if he thought they should send a party back to the camp, or return all together to save it. But while they consulted, the King was seen to be approaching them from their rear. The Greeks wheeled, supposing that the King meant to attack them; but the King passed them at once distance with his army, by the same route as that by which he had come, taking with him both those who had deserted to the Greeks during the fight, and the troops of Tissaphernes.

Tissaphernes, though he commanded the King's left wing, had not fled from the Greeks but had charged through them, the light-armed troops opening lanes in their ranks for him, as the heavy-armed had done for the chariots. He had killed none, but the Greeks struck at his men with their swords as they passed, and hurled javelins at them. Finding himself thus tricked, the satrap had not turned round to follow the pursuing Greeks, but had kept on till he reached their empty camp and there met the King. Now they came back together,

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with their forces united for battle. They were enough to hem the Greeks all round, had not Clearchus seen his danger and fallen back on the river. The King's army lined up opposite to them; and the Greeks, their retreat cut off, chanted their battle-hymn again and charged with more spirit than ever. Once again the Persians dared not await their attack, but fled even more promptly than before. The Greeks pursued them to a certain village—most likely the village of Cunaxa, which gave the battle its name, and there had to halt; for a hill rose beyond the village, on which the King's men were rallying; and while the hill was held by cavalry, the Greeks could not climb it and find out what was going on. But they could see the royal standard there—a golden eagle on a spear with its wings outspread.

By and by the cavalry began to disperse. But Clearchus, too wary to be caught in an ambush, did not yet lead his forces up the hill, till he should hear from scouts what was on the far side. After a while the scouts came back with news that the cavalry were in full flight; and just as this news came in, the sun set.

So the Greeks halted, piled their arms, and took some much-needed rest: wondering

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where Cyrus was, and why no messenger from him had reached them. They had no doubt but that the prince had been as successful as themselves; and guessed that he was either still away in pursuit of the enemy, or had pushed forward to secure some fort or position of vantage. Their one uneasiness was to know whether they should stay there that night and send a party for their baggage, or return all together to the place where they had left it. At last they decided to return together, and reached their tents about supper-time.

But there an unpleasant surprise awaited them. They found that almost all their baggage had been plundered and spoiled, their food and drink destroyed or carried off, and the waggons of barley-meal and wine (which Cyrus had reserved especially for them) stripped also. So the Greeks had no supper that evening; they had already missed their dinner, since the King had appeared before the mid-day halt was made; and in this dismal state they had to pass the night.

At daylight the generals met, surprised that Cyrus had neither appeared himself, nor even sent any message to tell them what they should do. The reason could only be, they

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felt, that Cyrus found himself obliged to press on and confirm his victory; so it seemed best to them to pack what baggage was left and to march forward in battle-array till they came up with the prince.

The sun came up across the edge of the plain, and they were on the point of starting, when they saw messengers approaching at last. They recognised Glus, one of Cyrus's generals, and Procles the governor of Teuthrania, a Spartan by descent.

"Where will we find Cyrus?" the Greek leaders cried.

But Procles answered grimly: "You will not find him anywhere; for he has been defeated, and is dead!"

CHAPTER XIV

You may imagine into what despair this news plunged the Greeks.

"Ariaeus," the messenger went on, "has fled back to the camp whence we started yesterday. But he has many troops with him, and is about to make his way back to Ionia. He will wait for you till tonight, if you care to come too."

At last Clearchus spoke. "Tell Ariaeus, that we at any rate have beaten the King,

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and that as you see, no enemy any longer molests us. If you had not brought word, we should have marched against the King again; and we promise Ariaeus that, if he will come with us instead of returning home, we will set him on the throne. For those who conquer are entitled to rule."

So saying he sent the messenger back, and with them Cheirosophus the Spartan and Menon the Thessalian, the latter having asked to go, since he was bound to Ariaeus by ties of friendship. The rest waited, furnishing themselves with such food as they could by killing their baggage-animals, and making cooking-fires of the arrows, shields and empty waggons which were scattered in all directions over the battle-field. It was still something short of noon when some heralds of the King arrived, and asked to speak with the generals.

"The King," they said, "having gained the victory and slain Cyrus, orders you Greeks to lay down your arms and present yourselves before the gates of his city, that you may win such mercy as he may be willing to show."

At these ominous words, the Greek leaders looked at each other doubtfully; but Clearchus was ready with a curt reply. "It is not for conquerors to give up their arms," he said;

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and added, as word was brought to him that the day's sacrifice was ready for his inspection: "Do you, my fellow-captains, give these heralds whatever answer you think right."

"We will die," said one, "rather than give up our arms."

And Proxenus, Xenophon's friend, put a shrewd question to the heralds. "Does the King ask our arms as a conqueror, or as a friend? If as a conqueror, why has he not come and taken them by force? If as a friend, let him say what he offers our soldiers in exchange?"

"The King has slain Cyrus, and therefore regards himself as conqueror," the heralds replied. "He also looks upon you Greeks as his captives; you are here in the middle of his realm, shut in by rivers which you cannot cross and by hosts which you cannot hope to conquer."

These words indeed were no boast, but perfectly true; yet a certain captain replied: "We have now nothing that can help us, but our courage and arms. Our courage may save us still, if we keep our arms; but if we give them up, we must expect to be deprived of our lives. Think not, then, that we shall give up the only thing of value that

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remains to us; rather with these in our hands, we will fight for whatever you possess of value."

The heralds smiled. "You speak like a philosopher, young man, in neat phrases; but believe us, you must be mad if you imagine that your courage can defeat the full power of the King."

This, again, was so true that several of the generals gave way to their fears, and said that as they had been faithful to Cyrus, so they might serve the King to his great profit if he were willing to be their friend: and that whether he might wish to send them on a march against Egypt, or elsewhere, they would help him to conquer.

Just then Clearchus came back from inspecting the omens of the sacrifice, and asked whether the heralds had yet been answered. But the latter replied: "Your comrades, Clearchus, each give a different answer; let us hear yours."

So Clearchus addressed himself to the heralds' spokesman, who was himself a Greek. "I was glad to see you come, Phalinus, and so were the rest, I think; for you are of our own race. You see what numbers we possess, and in what case we are. We beg you in the

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name of our gods, advice us wisely and honourably how we should answer the King: remembering that men will some day say, that being sent to us to demand our arms, you gave us such and such a counsel. For when that day shall come, you will wish Greeks to say that you advised us honourably."

This was a clever appeal on Clearchus' part; he hoped to make the very man who came as herald from the King advise them to keep their arms, so that the Greeks' hopes might be raised. But Phalinus evaded the appeal with equal cunning, declining to answer as Clearchus wished. "If you have one chance in ten thousand to save yourselves by fighting the King, I advise you to keep your arms. But if not, I advise you to save yourselves in the one way which is still open to you."

But Clearchus shook his head. "We thank you for your advice, Phalinus, but we return this answer: if the King wants us as his friends, we shall be more use to him with our arms than without, but if we have to fight him, we shall need our arms for ourselves!"

"Well," said Phalinus, "I will tell him so. But the King has one other message for you.

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While you remain encamped where you are, he is willing to observe a truce: but if you advance or retreat, there must be war."

"Tell the King," replied Clearchus, "that we are of the same mind as himself."

"And that is——?" asked Phalinus, not knowing quite what this answer implied.

"If we remain here, truce: but if we move, war."

And since this was all that Clearchus would say, the heralds had to return still ignorant of what the Greeks meant to do.

They had hardly left the Greeks, when Procles and Cheirisophus returned from the camp of Ariaeus the Persian and his army. Menon, the third of the Greek leaders who had gone as messengers, stayed with Ariaeus. The two others reported Ariaeus' answer. "I cannot think of making myself King," Ariaeus had told them, "for there are many Persians of more noble rank than myself who would not endure it. So, if you wish to march with me, you must join me tonight; if not, I shall set out by myself in the early morning." Clearchus heard this message carefully; but he still gave no sign even to the other generals what he meant to do.

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At sunset, however, he called all the generals and declared his mind. "My friends," he said, "the sacrifices which I made today were to seek omens from the gods in two matters: the first, whether we should march against the King; the second, whether we should join what is left of Cyrus's army under Ariaeus. For the first, the omens were not favourable; and I have since had good reason to understand this, for I have learned there is a river between us and the King—the Tigris, which we cannot cross since we have no boats. Yet it is certainly not possible for us to stay here, for we have no means of obtaining food. But the omens for joining Ariaeus were most favourable. This then is what we had better do: let each man sup on what he has; when the trumpet gives the signal for going to rest (for we must deceive any spies who may be listening within earshot of our camp) let the troops load the baggage animals; when it sounds again, let them all follow the leading company, keeping the baggage next the river and the heavy troops on the outside."

This he advised, and the rest went away and obeyed him. Thenceforth, Clearchus acted as the leader of all—not because they had formally elected him, but because everyone perceived that he alone was fitted to take

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charge. And indeed he was the most experienced and wise of the Greeks; there was no detail which he had not thought out with care; in spite of all he had to do, he had found time to reckon the exact distance they had come on their long journey—ninety-three days' march from Ephesus in Ionia, whence the Greek troops had started: a distance of over sixteen hundred miles:* while their present distance from Babylon was said to be forty-five miles.

CHAPTER XV

So the Greeks slipped away in silence, late that evening, with Clearchus leading. And about midnight they arrived at the place where Cyrus had halted the night before the battle. Here they found Ariaeus and his troops, and the chief leaders of the two armies met in council. Both sides then took a solemn oath to be true allies and not to betray each other; the Persians swearing a second oath, that they would lead the way without treachery. They did this after sacrificing a

*Note. Xenophon gives these distances in "parasangs," an ancient Persian measure. Scholars have variously reckoned the parasang as from 2.8 to 3.1 English miles. For purposes of this translation, I have reckoned it as 3 miles, throughout.

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bull, a wolf, a boar and a ram over a hollow shield: the Greeks dipping a sword and the Persians a lance into the mixed blood.

When they had pledged their faith, Clearchus said: "Since we are now to march together, Ariaeus, tell us what you think: shall we return the way we came, or can you advise a better?

"If we return the way we came," the Persian replied, "we shall all die of hunger; for we have little food with us, and for the last seventeen days of our journey hither, we either found no food at all, or have taken what there was. My plan is now to take a longer road, but one where we shall find plenty. And for the first few days we must march as fast as we can, that we may keep as far as possible from the King's army. Once we are two or three days ahead of him, he will be unable to catch us; he will not dare pursue us with a small force; and with a large one he will be unable to travel at our speed, or to provision his men."

This plan staked everything on escaping by flight. And yet their case was not at once so desperate as they had feared, as events were to prove. At dawn they began marching northward, hoping to reach a certain group of

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villages about sunset; but in the afternoon they thought they saw some of the King's cavalry; there was a rush to form the battle-array, and Ariaeus (who had been wounded and was riding in a waggon) got down and put on his armour with the rest; meanwhile the scouts returned with news that what had been seen in the distance was not cavalry, but some baggage-animals grazing; from which they all inferred that the King's army was encamped somewhere near. Smoke was seen rising from some neighbouring villages. Clearchus did not turn that way, however, (his troops being tired and hungry, and the hour late), nor did he let it seem as though he were in flight, but kept straight on until his vanguard reached the place at which they had aimed, about sunset. They found that the King's troops had been before them here, and had removed not only food but even the wood-work of the houses. So those who reached there first encamped in such quarters as there were; while the rest, arriving in the dark, had to make shift as best they could, and caused such tumult shouting to one another that even the enemy heard them.

This had the effect of making the nearest of the enemy run away, as the Greeks found

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next morning. During the night, however, there was a sudden panic among the Greeks themselves, which led to much shouting and confusion. Even now, Clearchus was not dismayed; he sent a herald through the tents, to cry out that "whoever would tell him who had loosed the ass in the camp should receive a talent of silver;" now a talent was equal to two hundred and fifty pounds of English money; the soldiers therefore saw that Clearchus, by offering this absurdly large reward, was making fun of them for their cowardice; and so the panic was stayed.

At dawn Clearchus bade the Greeks form up in the same order as that in which they had entered the battle of Cunaxa. But it soon appeared that for all his haughty messages, the Great King had been alarmed to find the Greeks marching near his camp; for he sent heralds, not, as yesterday, to demand surrender, but to propose a truce.

Clearchus happened to be parading the troops, when the heralds asked leave to speak with him. He sent word that they must wait a little, and at once began to change the order of the soldiers, so that the smartest and best-armed of them were on the outsides of the square. Some of the Greeks had lost their

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arms, and many more had not yet had time to repair the damage of the battle; but by selecting carefully his outside men, Clearchus made the army look as though it were in first-rate condition, thus proving yet again how clever a commander he was. The pick of all his men he chose for his bodyguard, as he went out presently to meet the King's heralds. "Well," said he, "What message do you bring us this morning?"

"The King has given us power to arrange a truce," the heralds replied.

Nothing could be more welcome to the Greeks just now, than a truce; but Clearchus was far too cunning to let the heralds know that. He laughed, and shook his head. "Go back and tell the King that we must fight him first. For we have had no breakfast; I dare not even talk about a truce to my soldiers, till they have had something to eat!"

At this the heralds looked at each other in surprise. But Clearchus would give no other answer, so they had to depart; and you may be sure he led them back by such a route that they could see for themselves the fine appearance of his army. It was not long before they returned, however; which showed

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Clearchus that the King was encamped quite near.

"The King," they said, "agrees to what you say; and we have brought you guides who, if the truce is made, will lead you to where you can obtain some provisions."

"Will the truce cover only those of us who go to speak with the King?" Clearchus asked. "Or will the whole army be left at peace?"

"The whole army," they replied, "until your message is brought to the King."

Clearchus now requested them to wait, till he had spoken with his officers. They then held council, and made up their minds to arrange the truce at once, and to go after the provisions at leisure. "But we will make them wait a little longer before we reply," Clearchus said, "lest they should think we are too eager to agree to their terms."

In due time he received the heralds again, consented to the truce, and bade them conduct the Greeks to where food was to be found. But he took care to make the army march in battle array, and himself brought up the rear with a strong guard in case of a treacherous attack.

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CHAPTER XVI

The plain through which they marched was cut by many ditches and canals, full of water. They could not cross these without bridges; but they used palm-trees which had fallen down, and felled many more, so that the canals did not check them.

Clearchus supervised the work himself, holding a spear in his right hand and a rod in his left; and if he noticed any shirkers, did not hesitate to pick the worst offender and give him a beating, He also worked himself, leaping forward if ever the labour seemed too hard, so that his soldiers were ashamed to be less eager than he. He had set only men of under thirty to this work; but when the older men saw how Clearchus toiled they came forward and lent a hand likewise. Clearchus was indeed especially anxious to make haste with the bridge-building; for it was not the time of year for watering the plain, and he suspected that the King had had the canals filled on purpose to dishearten the Greeks, and to make their march seem more difficult.

So in a while they reached the villages, where the guides told them they could obtain food. And food there was in plenty—corn, and wine made from dates, and a bitter drink

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brewed from the dates by boiling. The dates themselves astonished the Greeks; for the same kind which they were used to eat at home, were here given to slaves, while those which the masters ate were of strange size and beauty; their colour resembled that of amber, and some they dried and preserved as sweetmeats. These dates were good to eat with wine; so also was the leaf bud, or "cabbage" as it is sometimes called, from the top of the palm-tree, which the Greeks tasted now for the first time and found as exquisite in taste as it was in appearance. But both the cabbage and the amber dates were apt to give them headache; and the Greeks noticed that a palm from which the cabbage was cut soon withered and died.

When the army had camped among these villages for three days, a fresh embassy arrived from the King. This time they were no common heralds, but the satrap Tissaphernes himself with several Persian nobles and a large retinue. The generals met them, and at once Tissaphernes made a friendly speech.

"You know, O Greeks," he began, "that I am a neighbour of yours. And when I saw into what troubles you had fallen, I thought it a piece of good fortune if I could induce the King to let me conduct you safe

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home again; both you and all the rest of Greece, I think, would thank me for such a service as that. I therefore made your safety my suit to the King; asking his favour, both because I had been the first to warn him that Cyrus was marching against him, and because I had brought to him at the same time a force of troops, with which I alone did not flee before you Greeks, but charged through you and joined the King in Cyrus's camp. The King has promised to think over my request; meanwhile he bids me come and ask you why you ever undertook to fight against him; and I would counsel you to give him a fair answer, that I may plead your cause to him with better hope of success."

The Greek leaders withdrew, and after taking counsel together returned the following answer through Clearchus: "We neither enlisted under Cyrus in order to make war on the King, nor knew when our march began that we were being led against him. But Cyrus, as you yourself well know, invented other reasons for what he was doing, that he might tempt us to follow him without betraying his plans to you. He treated us honourably and bestowed many favours on us; so that when afterwards we saw him in

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danger, we should have been ashamed before gods and men to desert him. But now that Cyrus has been killed, we neither question the King's rule, nor wish to harm his country; least of all should we desire to kill him, or to do anything else than return to our own homes unhindered. If anyone helps us, we shall not fail to pay our debt to him to the utmost of our power; but with the god's help we shall do our best to avenge ourselves on anyone that does us an injury."

He ended; and Tissaphernes, having heard him out, prepared to take his leave. "I will report your answer to the King," he said, "and bring back his answer; let the truce stand until you see me again, and meanwhile I will provide you with a market."

The Greeks had hoped that Tissaphernes would return at once with the King's decision; but they had two days' anxious waiting before he appeared again. "The King has given me leave to save you," he announced. "I did not gain it easily; many of his nobles spoke against it, saying that it would ill become the Great King to let men escape, who had dared to make war against him. But I am now allowed to promise on his behalf, that the countries through which you have to pass will treat

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you as friends. We will conduct you back to Greece in good faith, and will give you the chance of buying food; or where you cannot buy, we will allow you to take for yourselves what you need. You on your part must swear to us, that you will march as through a friendly land without doing mischief, paying for what you take when we provide a market, and at other times demanding only a supply of food and drink."

To these conditions the Greeks agreed. Oaths were then sworn; Tissaphernes and his comrades, among whom was no less a person than the brother of the King's wife, gave their right hands to the Greek leaders and received the Greeks' in return.

"And now," concluded Tissaphernes, "I must go back to the King. But I shall come again, when I have made the arrangements needed for your safe-conduct to Greece, and for my own return to my province."

CHAPTER XVII

Once more the Greeks hoped it would not be long before they saw the satrap again, and once more they were disappointed. The long days went slowly by, and they had no word of him.

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Their fears would have been confirmed, had they known how Tissaphernes was spending his time. First he went back to Babylon, where the King now was, and was rewarded for his work with the hand of the King's daughter and with the province of which Cyrus had been satrap. He and the King moreover were devising a plan, of which the Greeks soon had only too much evidence. Numbers of Persian visitors were observed coming and going in Ariaeus' camp; some were the friends and relatives of Ariaeus himself, with hopeful and tempting messages; the King, they said, was willing to overlook their treason in marching against him, and to forget what was past; but they held out no promises of similar favour to the Greeks. So as the days went by, the soldiers of Ariaeus, whenever they met the Greeks, began to show them less friendship. The Greeks soon noticed this, and became uneasy. After a while they sought Clearchus and the other generals, and said: "Why do we stay so long? Do we not know the King desires our destruction above all things, so that no men of Greece may ever again dare to make war against him? Just now he cunningly prolongs our stay, because his own troops are not all

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assembled; but when he has collected his full force, he will surely attack us. It may be also that he is having walls built, or trenches dug, somewhere ahead of us, to cut off our retreat; for he will never willingly allow us to go home to Greece, and there tell how so few of us defeated him at his own gates and returned home in spite of him!"

Clearchus answered them: "I have thought the same myself. But I fear, if we leave our camp, we shall be thought to have declared fresh war and to have broken the truce. Besides, if we leave here on our own account there will be no one to provide us with food; we have no guides to lead us; we shall have lost the comradeship of Ariaeus, and shall have no friends. I do not know what other rivers we may have to cross: but the Euphrates certainly will be too hard a barrier, if the enemy dispute our way. Again, if we have to fight we have now no cavalry, whereas the enemy's is both strong and numerous; so that in victory, we should have no way of pursuing and killing those whom we put to flight; and in defeat, no escape. As for the King, I cannot think that he intends to destroy us; for if so, he is quite strong enough to do so at once, without swearing and

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perjuring himself in the eyes of the gods, and so making all his future pledges worthless to everyone."

The Greeks were not quite convinced, though Clearchus kept putting out many arguments to the same effect. At last, after twenty days, Tissaphernes appeared. He had his army with him, as though he meant to return to his own province. So all three hosts set out. Tissaphernes went first, showing them the way and making it possible for them to buy food. Ariaeus and his army marched with Tissaphernes, and even shared the same camps. But the Greeks, still suspicious of treachery, marched a little apart, with their own guides to keep them in touch with the main column; at night they seldom camped within three miles of each other; in short, both parties kept on the alert, as though they were enemies, and by so doing increased their mutual distrust. More than once, when they collected fuel or fodder in neighbouring fields, the soldiers came to blows; so that their march was far from being a friendly progress.

In three days they reached and passed a great wall, built of burnt bricks laid in bitumen. This was a hundred feet in height

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and twenty thick, and its length was said to be sixty miles; it was not far from Babylon.* They marched two dozen miles in the next two days, and came to the river Tigris. And here, a curious incident occurred.

The Persian army crossed the river before they camped for the night. The Greeks, arriving somewhat later, camped on the near side of it, not far from a large and thickly-wooded park. After supper, as Proxenus and Xenophon were walking round the camp, a stranger approached the sentries and asked to see Proxenus or Clearchus; but though he came from Ariaeus, he did not ask to see Menon, who was Ariaeus' friend. On being led to Proxenus, close by, the man said: "Ariaeus, who loved Cyrus and so wishes you well, sends me to warn you secretly, lest the Persians should attack you in the night; for a large body of them are encamped in the park near you. He also advises you to send men and guard the bridge over the Tigris; tonight Tissaphernes means to break it down, that you may be unable to cross the river and may be caught by him between the river and the canal."

**Note.* Some scholars think it reached from the Tigris to the Euphrates, and that its ruins are those now called "Nimrod's Wall."

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When Clearchus in turn heard this from the stranger's lips, he was perplexed and anxious. But a young officer of his council, who had been standing by deep in thought, said suddenly: "These two designs—the plan of breaking the bridge, and the plan of attacking us—do not seem to me to agree. For if they win, there will have been no need to break the bridge, since we cannot escape from them; and if they lose, the broken bridge will prevent their retreating towards their friends, or their friends coming to help them." In short, the young officer maintained that the message was a lie.

Clearchus called back the stranger and questioned him. "How much land lies between the river and the canal of which you speak?"

"Enough to hold several villages and large towns," the spy replied.

It was then clear to the Greek generals that Tissaphernes, so far from wishing to break the bridge, was afraid lest the Greeks themselves should break it: after which, staying in the island between the river and canal, they might prolong the revolt against the King, drawing provisions from the fertile district and recruits from the King's own subjects who were dissatisfied.

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Clearchus therefore, though for safety's sake he set a guard on the bridge, was not surprised to find that no attack was made on him during the night.

At daylight he led his troops across the bridge, which was made of thirty-seven boats. The men had orders to be on the alert, for Clearchus had heard a rumour that the Persians meant to attack them while crossing. This fear was not fulfilled; but as they crossed. one of the generals of Ariaeus came into view with his suite, as though to see for himself what the Greeks were doing. When he had satisfied himself that they were crossing the river, he rode away.

Four days later the Greeks were spied on again. They had marched sixty miles and were crossing a smaller river, when they encountered a fresh general of Artaxerxes,' who was bringing troops from Susa. This general made no attempt to hinder them, but halted to watch them march by. Clearchus however marched his men two abreast, and halted now and then with his first company, so as to delay the whole column. This formation made the army seem much larger even to the Greeks themselves, and the Persians were amazed at it.

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Next followed ninety miles of desert country, which took them six days. They then reached some villages belonging to Parysatis, the mother of Cyrus. These Tissaphernes bade them plunder; for he still hated the dead Cyrus so, that he rejoiced at the chance to injure the mother who had favoured him. The Greeks found here plenty of corn, animals and other supplies, with which both body and spirit were refreshed against the next five days' march, again through the desert. They were now marching North-North-West—that is, upstream—with the Tigris on their left; and at one point, where a town stood upon the opposite shore, the Persian troops once more made rafts of skins, to bring over their provisions.

CHAPTER XVIII

All this while the ill-feeling between the two armies was still increasing; but though the Greeks grew more and more suspicious of their guides, they had no proof that Tissaphernes was planning any treachery. After crossing the desert they had three days' rest; during which Clearchus resolved to go to Tissaphernes himself, and see if they could not heal this enmity before it

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became any worse; and the Satrap, on hearing Clearchus' message, seemed no less ready for a friendly meeting. Arriving at his tent, Clearchus began:

"I know, Tissaphernes, that we have taken oaths and pledged our right hands not to harm each other; and yet I notice that your army is constantly on guard against ours, as against enemies, which makes our soldiers also distrust yours. But since I find you make no attempt to hurt us, and since we certainly should meditate no such attempt against you, it seems right that we meet together and end these suspicions. For I have known of men who, falsely suspecting each other, have been so loth to suffer the first injury that they have tried to inflict it; so that great harm has befallen one or other, where none need have been. I think the surest safeguard against such mistakes is to speak frankly before they happen; so I have come here to convince you that yon have no cause to distrust us.

"First and most binding, there is the oath which we have sworn before the gods. We dare not now be enemies; for he who breaks such an oath cannot hope to prosper;

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no speed will enable him to flee the wrath of the gods, no darkness to hide from it, no stronghold to bar it out; since all things everywhere are in the power of the gods, to the far ends of the world."

"Secondly, quite apart from what we feel with regard to our oath and the gods, there is our personal advantage. Your safety, Tissaphernes, is our richest and chief possession; for with your help all roads are easy, all rivers can be crossed, and food shall not fail. Without you, we should be like men groping through the dark, afraid of any other men, yet more afraid of solitude in our ignorance of the way. Even if we were mad enough to kill you and go forward without a guide, should we not then have to reckon with the Great King as your avenger?"

"Thirdly, consider how great harm I should do to myself, if I consented to attempt any treachery against you. In days past I wanted Cyrus for my friend because I thought that he, of all men of our time, was the best able to reward those who deserved well of him; now I find you returning to possess not only Cyrus's power and lands, but your own too: and the King's might, which was opposed to Cyrus, already supporting you. Shall I be mad enough to make you my enemy?"

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"Consider, further, how in an alliance between you and me, I myself may have something to offer. The Mysians, as I hear, are bad neighbours to you; the Pisidians are brigands; with my present force I could prevent them from annoying you for ever. As for the Egyptians, your chief enemies, I do not see what allies could be more useful to you than the Greeks in taking vengeance on them. In short, with us for comrades you will be able to command great friendships, and to strike terror into your foes. Nor should we serve you merely for our pay, but for gratitude too, if we were saved by your help now."

"When I remember all these things, the fact that you distrust us Greeks fills me with amazement. The reason can only be that some enemy is slandering us to you—" concluded Clearchus earnestly. "I only wish that I could hear the name of him who is clever enough to deceive you so monstrously!"

Perhaps Clearchus had already a shrewd suspicion who the traitor was. But Tissaphernes chose to ignore the hint of his closing words, though his answer was friendly. "I am glad, Clearchus, to hear how carefully and wisely you have thought out this matter; for I see now that it is clear to you, that if you

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plotted anything against me you would be harming yourself. Let me convince you in my turn that you have no reason to distrust either me or the King. If we wished to destroy you, do we not seem to be numerous enough to do so without danger to ourselves? Does not our march give plenty of chances for us to take an advantage of you? The folk who dwell among these plains are our friends. Hills lie in front of us, which we could occupy, and so bar your way. Rivers too, where we could fall upon you as you crossed and fight a small part of your troops at a time. Some of those rivers, too, you could not cross at all unless we were to help you. If all these chances failed, we could still fire the stores of food and starve you into surrender, brave as you are. Why then, having so much on our side and so little danger, should we choose treachery as our weapon against you—treachery, the one means which is hateful to the gods and disgraceful in the eyes of men? That is the weapon of desperate men, driven by necessity and evil of heart! We are not such; if we were, we should have turned against you long before this. Be sure, I have dealt justly with you because I wanted to prove myself the friend of the Greeks, and to enlist the good-will of those whom Cyrus, when he made his

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march, trusted only on account of the pay he gave them. You have already mentioned some of the ways in which you may prove useful to me, but I have not forgotten another, the greatest of all. For though the King alone may wear the crown on his head, there may yet be another who may wear it in his heart—with your help!"

In his last words Tissaphernes himself had given a hint. He dared speak no more plainly; but he meant Clearchus to understand that he himself might some day aim at the throne of Persia, and that if he succeeded, the Greeks would have a still more powerful friend. Clearchus judged him to be sincere, and pressed his own hint further: "Then, since we have such good cause to be friends, do you not think we ought to punish the slanderers who try and make us enemies?"

Tissaphernes thought for a while. "Come to me publicly," he said at last, "captains as well as generals, and I will tell you all who the slanderers are." And when Clearchus agreed to do this next day, the Persian invited him to stay to supper that evening.

Clearchus not only supped, but spent the night as the guest of Tissaphernes, who showed

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him the greatest courtesy. Next morning he returned to the Greek camp, and told how he had fared. He explained everything in full—Tissaphernes' good reception of him, the proposals he had made, and his agreement to return that day with a full muster of Greek officers. He also plainly warned the Greeks that henceforth, anyone trying to sow enmity between the two armies would be punished as a traitor.

We have already seen that Clearchus had in mind a definite person as the slanderer. This was his fellow-general Menon. Menon, he knew, had held council with Ariaeus and the satrap, and was collecting a small faction to intrigue against himself, thinking that if he could win over the whole army from Clearchus, he might make his own terms of friendship with Tissaphernes. This did not suit the plans of Clearchus at all; for he foresaw disaster to their enterprise, if the Greek army were divided between rival generals.

He therefore urged with all his power that the plan he had made should be put into effect. The Greeks were by no means all convinced. "No Persian is to be trusted," they demurred. "We have had evidence enough of Asian treachery. If you make up

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your mind to go, at least take only a few officers with you, and do not expose them all to a possible trick."

But Clearchus maintained his own view. He carried great weight among the Greeks, as you may suppose, for he had led them hitherto so skilfully and brought them through so many difficulties that no one could doubt his wisdom. Destiny fought against the Greeks in this, that at the turning-point of their affairs their trusted leader should, for once, have made a tragic mistake. Clearchus pleaded with such eloquence that in the end he prevailed on five generals and twenty captains to go with him; the rest still refused; but there were added to the party about two hundred soldiers, who followed as though to purchase stores in the Persians' market, and were therefore unarmed.

Before long the embassy arrived before Tissaphernes' tent. The Greek generals, besides Clearchus himself, were Menon, Proxenus (the friend of Xenophon), Agias and Socrates. These were invited to come in, but the captains remained at the door. Not many minutes afterwards, a signal was given. The generals within were seized by guards, and the officers outside massacred. At the same

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time a body of Persian cavalry galloped out on to the plain, riding down and murdering every Greek that they met. The fear of Clearchus' fellow-generals had been only too well-founded.

CHAPTER XIX

Soon enough the news of this disaster became known to the Greeks. The galloping cavalry were seen from the other camp; and while the Greeks stared, wondering what such a stir might mean, there came running the one survivor of their comrades, a soldier called Nicarchus, who had been wounded in the stomach and was clutching his intestines in his hands as he fled. He gasped out what had occurred; and the Greeks ran to arms in deadly fear, expecting every instant that the Persians would charge upon their camp. Instead, however, the Persians sent only an embassy, consisting of Ariaeus and two more who had been Cyrus's best friends; with whom, the Greek interpreter said, he recognised the brother of Tissaphernes. They had an armed guard with them; and, approaching the camp, called loudly for any general or captain of the Greeks to come forth and receive a message from the King.

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Cheirisophus, the senior of the surviving generals, chanced to be absent at the time, seeking provisions in a neighbouring village. But there went forth two other generals, Cleanor and Sophaenetus, and with them Xenophon, that he might hear what had happened to Proxenus. These advanced cautiously, and stopped when they were just within hearing of the embassy. At once Ariaeus cried out: "O Greeks, Clearchus has been found guilty of perjury, and of breaking the truce; he has received the punishment he deserved and is dead. Menon and Proxenus, who denounced his treachery, are being held in honour. Now the King sends us to demand your arms; they are his, since they belonged to his subject Cyrus."

To which the Greeks replied, Cleanor interpreting: "Most wicked Ariaeus, and you others who were supposed to be Cyrus's friends, have you no fear of gods or men that after making a solemn treaty of friendship with us, you have thus treacherously deserted us? Have you allied yourselves to Tissaphernes, most godless and evil of mankind, to murder the very men with whom your oath of friendship was sworn, and to take the part of our enemies?"

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"Clearchus," said Ariaeus, "was found to have entered on a treacherous plot against Tissaphernes and his officers."

The Greeks had no reply to this; for though they did not believe it of Clearchus, it was a charge which they had no evidence to refute. Presently Xenophon said: "If it be true that Clearchus broke his oath, then he has suffered justly; but for the others, even you admit that they kept faith with you. Send therefore Proxenus and Menon back to us; being friends to both of us, they will no doubt advise us what is best for us and for you."

But to this the Persians, though they talked among themselves for some time, seemed to have no answer. They turned and went back to their own camp without further words.

What happened to their unlucky generals the Greeks heard in due course; they were carried off to Babylon where the King was, and there beheaded. Clearchus, Proxenus and the two lesser generals suffered at once, in which perhaps they were more fortunate than their colleague Menon; his life was spared for a while, no doubt because he had tried to ally himself with Ariaeus against his

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own friends; yet he had little benefit from his treachery, which seems to have earned him the contempt and hatred of Greece without ever winning the King's confidence; he suffered tortures for a full year, like a common criminal, and at the end of that time is said to have died. Clearchus was fifty years of age when he was executed: Proxenus, Agias and Socrates were much younger.

The Greeks were now in a sore plight, compared with which their former troubles seemed almost trifling. They had lost their most trusted and wise leaders. They had lost the alliance of the Persian host. They were not far from the King's gates, and had around them many a hostile city. No one would any longer make it easy for them to buy food. Their home was many a hundred miles away, and they had no guides. Rivers which they could hardly hope to cross lay ahead. Lastly, they had no cavalry; so that, as we have seen, they might defeat their enemies in battle without being any better off, since they could not pursue and kill them: whereas if they themselves were beaten, they would have no escape. It was no wonder if they spent that night in the blackest despair. Few tasted food; few even troubled to kindle

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fires; many withdrew a little from the place where the arms were piled, which they thought liable to attack, and lay down apart—unable to sleep for grief, and for longing after their homes and folk whom they never expected to see again.

And yet they had a saviour in their midst, though they did not know it. The young Athenian, Xenophon, as we have already seen, had joined the Greeks not as a soldier at all, but as the friend of Proxenus. His adventure had started in the following way.

Proxenus had been a native of Boeotia, which was the neighbouring state to that where Xenophon was born. From earliest life his heart was set on soldiering, and he had studied the art of war under a good instructor. Later, he saw his chance of winning renown by joining the expedition of Cyrus. From this enterprise he hoped to acquire not only a great name as a soldier, but wealth and influence too. Yet his conduct showed that he set justice before all these things, and meant to seek them only on the most honourable terms. He was a good commander, though inclined to be lenient; which led to his being greatly honoured and beloved by the best of his men, though sometimes overreached by the dishonest and worthless.

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One of his earliest and best friends was the Athenian Xenophon. And when he planned to join the adventure of Cyrus, he wrote to Xenophon and invited him to come too. The favour of Cyrus, as he pointed out, might prove more profit to Xenophon than anything which he was likely to gain in his own country.

This letter greatly tempted the young man. But being still uncertain whether to go, Xenophon sought the advise of his Athenian friend and teacher, the philosopher Socrates. Now Socrates reflected that Cyrus was not too popular among the Athenians, since he was thought to have helped the Spartans in a recent war against Athens; and he feared Xenophon might make trouble for himself at home, if he agreed to go. So he advised the young man to go to the oracle at Delphi, and ask the god Apollo what he ought to do. Xenophon went; but he had already made up his mind to accept Proxenus' offer, and therefore merely asked the oracle to what gods he should sacrifice and pray for success. When he returned and told this to Socrates, the philosopher shook his head. "You put your question wrongly," he pointed out. "You should have asked as I bade you, whether to go or not. However, since you have put the

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question in your own way, you must abide by what the god has said, and pray and sacrifice according to his directions."

So it befell that Xenophon set sail, joining the enterprise at Sardis on the eve of the march. Here Proxenus presented him to Cyrus, who joined in the Boeotian's request that the young man should march with them, and promised to send him home again when the adventure was ended. It was believed at that time, you will remember, that Cyrus was marching against the Pisidians only; nor did Proxenus deceive his friend in this matter, for Clearchus alone among the Greeks was in Cyrus's secret. Later, when Cyrus's real aim became known, young Xenophon was among those who decided to stand by Cyrus in his attempt to make himself King.

So here was Xenophon at last,—a civilian still, but compelled like the others to abide the result of the dead prince's failure. So far he had taken little part in the leaders' councils, save in so far as he had mixed with them as Proxenus' friend; but the Greeks had not failed to note the shrewdness and honesty of the young Athenian adventurer; and now in their desperate plight, they were prepared to listen to any possible leader in whose wits

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they could trust. In all the strange story of that heroic march, there is no stranger tale than that of the young student who came out as a mere civilian, but who was destined to return as leader and saviour of the whole host.

CHAPTER XX

That night when Xenophon, anxious and wakeful like the rest, had at last sunk into a troubled sleep, he had a vivid dream. He dreamed that he was in a thunder-storm, during which a bolt fell on his father's house and set it on fire. He sprang up in fear; and since the Greeks attached great importance to dreams, he began to puzzle out what this one might mean. In one respect the dream seemed favourable; for in the midst of trouble and danger, he had been shown the thunderbolt which was the symbol of Zeus. But in another respect he was afraid; the flames which burst all round him were sent by Zeus, who was the king of the gods; might it not mean that he could not escape from the Persian King, whose power hemmed in the Greeks?

"Why do I lie here idle?" he exclaimed to himself. "The night is passing, and at dawn it is most likely that the foe will attack

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us. If we fall into the King's hands, what fate can we expect but a shameful death, after being tortured and witnessing the torture of our friends? Yet here we lie, as though no danger threatened our rest, and there is none who takes thought for our defence or to devise any counsel···. But indeed, why should I look around for some leader from another city? Am I not old enough to think for myself?" For the Athenians prided themselves on being the cleverest and best-educated of the Greeks.

"At least I shall have no chance to grow much older," Xenophon added to himself with a sort of grim smile, "if I lie here and let the Persians come and take me!" With that he sprang up, and roused the captains who had served under his friend Proxenus.

"I cannot sleep," he cried, "any more than yourselves, when I think in what danger we lie. Our foes were wiser; for they took care to betray no enmity towards us till their plans were ripe. But on our side no one seems to know or care what is to become of us. Are we all stupid enough to look for mercy from the King—the man who cut off the head and hand of his own brother and fixed them on a pole? What fate then can *we* expect—we who have no good friend or

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relative at court to plead for us, we who have marched against the King to make him a slave, and to put him to death, maybe, if it lay in our power? Will he not visit us with every torture he can devise, to warn all men for ever against taking the field against him? Even while the truce endured, our case was piteous enough, since the abundance of the land was ours only while we had the money to buy it, and our money was almost spent: so that I sometimes feared a lasting truce might prove more dangerous to us than war. But now that they have put an end to the truce, it seems to me that we are no worse off, and may even be better. Their action frees us from our oath; henceforth such prizes as this land affords are ours for the fighting; and in that fight, the gods are surely on our side, since we have acted honestly and abstained from looting, while our foes have forfeited the goodwill of the gods by their perjury. Now we can enter upon open war with a better conscience than they. Our bodies, moreover, are more able than theirs to endure heat, cold and hardship, our minds more resolute with the help of the gods; while the Persians, if the gods grant our arms success, will be found more mortal and vulnerable.

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"But I can guess that you agree with what I say. Let us not wait then for the rest to come and persuade us to act like men, but be ourselves the first to arouse the army's valour. Prove yourselves brave, and worthier leaders than those who are now in charge of us. As for me, if you are willing to take control I will gladly follow you; or if you make me one of your generals, I shall ask no indulgence for my youth, but count myself man enough to do my duty."

Xenophon's bold speech confirmed the good esteem in which the rest held him, and they all begged him to become their leader, except one. This was a man named Apollonides who talked like a Boeotian; and it may be that the rest were less ready to heed him on that account, since the Boeotians were considered slow-witted by the other states of Greece. "It is absurd," he said, "to speak as though our safety could be won by any other means than by the King's consent. We have no choice but to approch our enemies and treat with them for peace. Consider the dangers that encompass us—"

But Xenophon cut him short. "You fool! You neither see what lies before your eyes, nor remember what you have been told.

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And yet you were in council with us on that day when the King, elated at Cyrus's death, sent to demand that we should give up our arms. When we refused, and went out and camped against him in full armour, did you not see how easily dismayed he was, sending an embassy to ask for a truce, and keeping us supplied with food till he gained it? But when our generals and captains, trusting in him and his truce, went to confer with him unarmed as you now advise us to do, were they not mocked, surprised and taken prisoners: so that they now have not even the power to die, much though they may desire it? All this you know very well; and yet you have no better counsel for us than to try persuasion again; and those who exhort us to defend ourselves with our arms you charge with talking absurdly!" Xenophon then turned to the rest, scornfully. "Captains, it seems to me that we should no longer treat this man as a comrade, but should lay baggage on his back and use him like an animal; for he disgraces both his own state and all Greece with such craven counsels!"

One of the others had been looking closely at Apollonides during this argument, and said suddenly: "But surely, this fellow

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has nothing to do with Boeotia or with any other state of Greece? For see, he has his ears pierced for ornaments, like a Lydian!" The rest observed that this was true, and expelled Apollonides from their council.

They now went through the muster-roll of the officers who survived, calling the general of each division where the general had escaped, and the most senior of the under-officers where he had not. There were about a hundred of them in all; and about midnight of that fatal day, they met at the centre of the camp where the arms were piled. The first to speak was Hieronymus, eldest of all the captains who had served under Proxenus. "We have met, generals and captains, at this crisis of our affairs, to see if together we can devise some plan for our common safety. But do you, Xenophon, first repeat to the assembly what you have already said to us."

So again Xenophon put forward his views. "The Great King and Tissaphernes," he concluded, "now make no secret of their enmity. They have seized our chief men by treachery, and are plotting the death of us all. Henceforth we must take any means we can to resist them by force. You are responsible, all depends on you. For the soldiers will

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look to you, and, if you seem disheartened, will lose courage likewise; but if you show a cheerful courage and exhort them to stand with you, be sure they will follow your lead. And it is right that you should assume control; in peace, you enjoyed higher and more honourable position than they; in war you must show your quality, and set an example to the troops both in wisdom and hard work. This you will best do if you lose no time in choosing generals to replace those whom we have lost; for without leaders nothing can be done anywhere, least of all in battle. In good order our safety lies; it is divided counsel that has brought us to the plight we are now in. Then, when new generals are appointed, let them assemble the full host and speak some words of encouragement. You see with what despair they wait about in the camp, or take up their guard-duties; useless for any task that may be laid on them, whether by night or day. If we can only hearten them, so that instead of fearing what they are likely to suffer they may be inspirited to do what they can, they will be serviceable troops once again. For as you know, the issue of a battle is not ruled by numbers alone, but by the more resolute courage with which one side or the other advances into the fray. Moreover, I have

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noticed that those who strive to save their own lives at all costs, most often perish wretchedly and with dishonour; whilst those who reflect that death must come to all, and in battle seek only to acquit themselves like men, more often survive to see old age and live more happily. Let us then play the man ourselves, and teach others to do likewise."

He ceased, and the general Cheirisophus followed him. "Till now I knew nothing of you, Xenophon, save that I had been told you were an Athenian. But now I praise you both for your words and deeds, and could wish for all our sakes that there were more like you. Come, comrades, lose no time! Elect your generals, and bring them straightway to the centre of the camp, where we will assemble the troops."

Then they delayed no longer, but chose new generals to support those who had survived: Timasion in place of Clearchus, Xanthicles in that of Socrates, Cleanor in that of Agias, Philesius in that of Menon, and Xenophon in that of Proxenus.

CHAPTER XXI

So at once the generals made their way to the centre of the camp, whither the troops had been summoned by Tolmides the herald; and having posted sentinels round the edge of the camp, they addressed the assembly. What each said is recorded faithfully in the pages of Xenophon, but we need not repeat the full speeches here. It was the custom of Greek armies for the commanders all to say a few words to hearten the troops, even though most of what they said was already known to their hearers. So, now, the generals mainly dealt with the events of the previous day, which were only too familiar to the unhappy Greeks,—Tissaphernes' treachery, the loss of Ariaeus' friendship, the fate of their former generals, and the great need of courage if they were to escape with their lives: lastly the hope that heaven might fight on the Greeks' side, since they had kept their oath while their foes were perjurers.

The speech of Xenophon himself made a great impression on the troops. He had adorned himself in splendid armour, thinking that if the gods gave the Greeks success, it would be suitable for the occasion: but if he were to die, he would prefer so to meet his

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end. He began by repeating what he had said to the officers, touching on the Persians' perjury and the danger of trying to be friends with them, and going on to assert his belief that open warfare was more likely to bring them to safety. At this point, just as he said the words "our hopes of safety," a soldier chanced to sneeze. Now the Greeks used to think a sneeze to be the best possible omen; and so Xenophon, seeing how the accident had heartened the soldiers, quickly followed it up in his next words. "Since Zeus the Saviour has sent us this omen, let us now vow to offer him a sacrifice at the place where we shall first reach friends!" The soldiers shouted their agreement, and the vow was made. They then sang the paean, or hymn of victory, after which Xenophon resumed what he was about to say.

He pointed out to them once more how natural it was that the gods should fight for them, seeing that their enemies had committed perjury. But he proceeded next to a fresh topic, untouched by the previous speakers: namely, to mention some of the great victories which Greece had won against Persia in the old days.

"I will remind you," he said eagerly, "of the great dangers which beset our ancestors,

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that you may think how it becomes you to be brave, and how the gods can save brave men even from deadliest peril. For when the Persians came with a great host to sweep my own city, Athens, from the face of the earth, the Athenians instead of running away took their lives in their hands, and not only resisted but routed them. They too, like us, had made a vow to heaven on the eve of the fray; for they had promised the goddess Artemis as many goats as the number that they should kill of the enemy; and being unable afterwards to collect goats enough (so great had been their victory) they resolved to fulfil their vow at the rate of five hundred a year: which number they still continue to sacrifice, to this day. Again, when Xerxes led against Greece a second army, so great that no man could number it, our fathers once more defeated the fathers of these Persians, both on land and sea. The monuments of those two victories are still to be seen; but the best monument of all is the Greek liberty which still endures, and in which you yourselves were born and bred. You call no man your master, but the gods alone.

"So much for your parentage. And have you dishonoured it? Did you not take the

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field, not many days ago, against the sons of those whom the old Greeks drove back? Did you not put to flight, with the gods' help, a host far greater than your own? Then, you fought bravely to win Cyrus a throne; now, when your own lives are at stake, it will become you to be still more valiant. And you may well feel greater confidence than before the late fight. For even then, when you had made no trial of their might and saw them in countless ranks before you, you were bold like your fathers to advance, and you put them to rout; now, having proved that even their great numbers do not prevent them from fearing you, can you be dismayed? As for the troops of Cyrus who have deserted us, we need have no regrets; they are more cowardly than those we have already defeated; so we are safer having them against us, than by our side.

"Some of you may suppose that the enemy's cavalry give them an advantage over us, who have none. Yet remember, ten thousand cavalry are but ten thousand men..." And here Xenophon, to whom the troops were now listening eagerly, laughed outright. "It is the men," he cried, "that have to do the work in a battle: for no one ever died of being bitten or kicked by a horse! Besides, a man on

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horseback has less sure an aim, and farther to fall if he is wounded!" Thus the wise Xenophon made light of what was a very real danger to the Greeks; and by making the soldiers laugh with him, began to restore their confidence. He next touched on the fear that they now possessed no guide, and no market in which to buy provisions; but here again he spoke cheerfully and light-heartedly. "Shall we do better, guided by Tissaphernes who is plotting our destruction, or by such guides as we may capture and threaten with death if they lead us astray? As for our food, we have no longer any money to buy it; but now that we are free of our oath, we may seize it for ourselves. Our Persian guides led us to rivers, too, which were almost impassable; taking our own course, we may act more wisely and cross such rivers near their source."

Lastly, when he had raised the soldiers' spirits by these clever arguments, Xenophon put forward certain plans which he had begun to form for the conduct of their march. He pointed out that there were Persian tribes, no braver certainly than the Greeks, who still maintained their freedom even in the King's empire—the Pisidians, for instance, who had rebelled against him and continued to set him

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at defiance: and the Mysians too. Xenophon's counsel was, that they should not let it be seen how eager they were to return to Greece, but should rather go leisurely as though they thought of settling down in those parts. "The King," he laughed, "would be glad enough to give the Mysians guides, and even make roads for them, if he thought he could so get rid of them! And so he would do for us, if the worst came to the worst and we declared that we intended to stay here. But I know well," he added more seriously, "that such a course would never commend itself to us Greeks; for if we once learned to live in idleness, and marry among the people of this land, we should be like the lotus-eaters in the old legend, thinking no more of our return home." He went on to propose how they might march most safely; and how they might fight (if fight they must) to the best advantage.

"Let us first burn our waggons, so that they may not hamper us on our way: our tents too, for they are heavy and awkward to carry"—(the Greek tents were made of skins) "—and are no help either in fighting or in getting food. I think, too, that we should rid ourselves of any other baggage that we can do without, keeping

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no more than our war-gear and our cooking pots, so that as many as possible of us may bear arms, and as few as possible baggage; if we are beaten in a fight, all that our baggage-men have piled up will pass to the conquerors, but if we win we can compel the enemy to carry for us.

"One duty remains: but a most urgent duty, as it seems to me. You see the enemy have not dared to make open war on us before seizing our generals; thinking no doubt that so long as those survived we should be more than a match for the Persian army in the field, but that if they had robbed us of our leaders we should perish in confusion. Let us see to it, then, that our new leaders are less trustful of the Persians than the old, and that their men are more alert to obey than they have sometimes been in the past. And if each man of you is resolute that he will promptly join an officer in suppressing any disorder, why, that will deal our enemies the hardest blow of all! For they will then be faced with ten thousand Clearchuses instead of one, who will let not a single soldier fail in his duty.

"But I will say no more; it is near dawn, and in a little while the foe may be upon us. Let all who think well of my plan give their

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assent at once, that we may set to work; but if any thinks he has a better, even though he be only a soldier in the ranks, let him boldly speak; since safety is our common concern."

None disagreed, and when Cheirisophus invited those who approved to hold up their hands, the whole army did so. The marching-order was then given, and the army set out towards some villages two miles away, where Xenophon had heard there were provisions. At his suggestion all the fighting-men were formed in a hollow square with the porters and slaves in their midst. For he had guessed the enemy would follow them close as soon as daylight appeared, like cowardly dogs that run snapping after those who pass by them, but turn tail from anyone who faces round and attacks them. Cheirisophus was appointed to lead the vanguard; for he was a Spartan, and the Spartans were at that time held the best warriors in Greece. Two of the elder generals commanded the flanks. Timasion and Xenophon himself took charge of the rear. And so their march was resumed.

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CHAPTER XXII

It had not long been light before they sighted the enemy. A Persian nobleman named Mithridates appeared, with about thirty horsemen, making signals of truce. He asked the generals to come within hearing, and addressed them as follows:

"O Greeks, you know that I was once faithful to Cyrus, and am now friendly to you. For this reason I am myself in no small danger, and if I found that you had any safe plan of escape, I should most gladly join you with the troops that I have. Let me know therefore what you have in mind, as one who bears you no ill-will and is ready to march with you."

The generals consulted together, and replied through Cheirisophus in the same terms which they had always used to the Persian embassies. "If no one hinders us, we shall march homeward doing as little injury to the land as we may; but if we find ourselves opposed, we shall fight."

To this Mithridates made the sort of reply which the Greeks had learned to expect. It was impossible, he said, for them to make their escape without the Great King's consent. But the Greeks cut him short at that; for they had recognised among his suite an officer of

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Tissaphernes, who had no doubt been sent to make sure that Mithridates delivered the message with which the King had secretly entrusted him. Henceforth, they made a rule that there should be no more intercourse by heralds; for even in this short interview the words of Mithridates had seduced one of their captains, Nicarchus, who in the following night deserted to the King with about twenty men.

They now dined, and crossed the river Zabatus, marching in close array and in the hollow square which Xenophon had advised. But they had not gone far before Mithridates appeared again, having with him two hundred cavalry this time, and four hundred slingers and archers. Once more he approached the Greeks with signals of truce; but when the men with him had come within range, some of them suddenly discharged their stones and arrows and wounded a number of the Greeks. Xenophon's rear-guard could make no reply; for not only did his archers shoot to a less distance than the enemy, but they were also lightly armoured and so were drawn up inside the ranks of the heavier troops; while the latter, javelineers, were out-ranged by the Persians. Seeing how things stood, Xenophon had no choice but to charge with his heavy

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infantry, in order to beat off the attack. The enemy fled at once—as soon, indeed, as the Greek line moved forward: thus gaining too long a start of Xenophon's men to be overtaken by them. And as the Greeks had no cavalry, the attackers escaped them without loss of life. Worse still, the Persian trick of shooting behind them from horseback cost the Greeks some losses; and when Xenophon recalled his men and resumed the march, the Persians began to harass them as before. They reached the villages by evening; but had been so delayed by Mithridates that the whole march that day did not amount to more than two and a half miles.

This depressed the spirit of the troops; and when Xenophon arrived with his rear-guard, Cheirisophus and the rest blamed him for joining battle on his own account, especially since quite a number of his men had been hurt, and he had done the enemy no damage. A less patient man than Xenophon might have resented such blame; but the Athenian frankly owned that his action had brought no profit. "And yet," said he, "I found myself obliged to turn on them, for they were wounding us without our raising a hand in defence. We can only thank the gods

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that they did not attack in full force; so that, while doing little serious harm, they have at least taught us what our army most lacks." He then went on to explain in what way the Persians had the advantage—namely, that they out-ranged not only the Greek javelineers but their archers too; while with regard to any pursuit, the Persians' prompt retreat would always make that impossible. "There is no safety for us on the march," he said, "till we have slingers and cavalry: the former to out-range the Persians in turn, the latter to overtake them. Now I have heard there are some Rhodians in our army who understand the use of the sling, and who are also used to shooting lead bullets which carry farther than the large stones which the Persians prefer. Let us enlist a corps of slingers then, some of whom will have slings already, and more who know how to plait them. If these are offered higher pay, and perhaps some privileges, we shall soon have a company to do us good service. Again, with regard to cavalry: at present we have none, but there are horses in the army—some mine, some which belonged to Clearchus, and many more which we captured from the Persians themselves, and which are now being used to carry packs. If we collect all

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these, equip them as mounts, and find riders for them, we shall be able to make the Persians' flight less easy than it has been today!"

The rest agreed, and that very night two hundred slingers were enlisted. Next day as many as fifty horses and riders were found fit for use; leather tunics and breastplates were served out to them, and the Athenian Lycius was made their captain.

They started marching earlier than usual that morning, for the scouts had brought word of a ravine and river to be crossed, where they feared Mithridates would attack them and have them in difficulties. The early start, however, forestalled Mithridates, who did not come in sight till the ravine had been crossed. He had now brought with him a thousand horsemen and four thousand archers and slingers, having obtained that number from Tissaphernes on promising that he would deliver the Greeks into his hands. The Persian waited till the Greeks were nearly a mile past the ravine, before he himself crossed it; then he came following with still more confidence, for his success the day before had made him despise his foes. But now a surprise was in store for him. His troops had

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hardly overtaken the Greeks and begun to discharge their missiles, when the Greek trumpet-call rang out. At once the heavy infantry charged back, and at the same moment the Greek cavalry came into action. As before, the enemy did not await their attack, but fled back towards the ravine. This time, however, they found themselves hotly pursued; and the ravine cutting off their retreat, a number of foot-soldiers were killed and eighteen horses captured. The Greeks, unbidden, took care to mutilate the bodies of the slain, that their appearance might terrify the Persians and discourage them from such another attack.

After this repulse the enemy were content to let the Greeks alone for a while; and the army, marching all the rest of the day without hindrance, rejoined the bank of the Tigris. At this point they found a great city called Larissa, once held by the Medes but now desolate. Its walls had been a hundred feet in height, and its circuit six miles. In olden times, when the Persians under Cyrus the Great had won their empire from the Medes, they had been unable to take Larissa till they were helped by a miracle; a great cloud had covered the sun, and darkened it;

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then the folk fled out of their city, and the Persians came in. There was a pyramid near by, on which the Greeks saw some of the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages, who had fled there for safety while the army went by.

Another day's march of eighteen miles brought the Greeks to a second desolate place, an ancient fortress of the Medes about which a similar legend was told. Men said that Cyrus had besieged this too, with no better success, till the god Zeus sent down a thunderbolt which made the defenders senseless; after which the Persians captured it.

Next day they only covered twelve miles; for now the satrap Tissaphernes himself came into view, overtaking them with his full force. He had his own regiments of cavalry: the troops of Orontes, son-in-law to the King: the Persian army which had belonged to Cyrus: another army which the King's brother had brought: and in addition, all the regiments which the King himself had sent. Such a great host seemed capable of utterly destroying the Greeks, as it came up behind them and enflanking them on both sides. Yet Tissaphernes did not risk a charge, nor showed any eagerness to endanger himself, but sent

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his slingers and archers into action first. The Rhodian slingers had been stationed not all together, but at intervals along the Greek ranks; and when their bullets and the arrows of their comrades began to fly, the Persians were massed so closely that every missile found its mark. The satrap had been cautious before; now he drew off in full retreat. The Greeks marched on again, but the Persians no longer troubled them for that day, since the Rhodians had proved that they could shoot farther than the Persian slingers, and even farther than the archers. The Greek bowmen, too, found that the enemy's arrows which they picked up were made for heavier bows than their own, and that they could shoot best by sending them high up into the air. And when they reached some villages towards evening, they discovered a great store of bowstrings there, and some lead from which bullets for the slings could be made.

They encamped in the villages that night and stayed there all next day collecting provisions. For the time being the Persians had had enough of skirmishing with them, and let them alone. But on the following day, as they marched over open country, Tissaphernes once more hung on their flanks and rear,

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shooting at them from a distance. They decided about this time that a square was not, after all, the best formation for a retreating army; for on a narrow road or at a bridge, if the flanks of the square close in, men are apt to be squeezed out of their place and to march crowded and jostling; and when the flanks extend again, the rear of the square is left with many disordered gaps; in either of which cases troops are so confused, and so nervous of attack from behind, that they are almost useless. Again, whenever the Greeks had to pass any narrow place such as a ford or bridge, each struggled to cross first, which gave the enemy an immense advantage. So at last, to remedy this, the generals formed six chosen companies of a hundred men each, with captains and sergeants. These marched beside the flanks; when the flanks closed, they fell behind, to cover any confusion; but when the square reopened, they filled up the gaps in the line. Henceforth there was no more trouble at any bridge; and if relief was needed anywhere in the main body, the six companies were always at hand.

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CHAPTER XXIII

In this new order the Greeks marched for four days, without suffering too acutely from their pursuers' attacks. On the fifth day they saw ahead of them some sort of palace, with meaner houses grouped round it. They saw also something more important—something which was to change the conditions of their march greatly—namely, the end of the plain through which they had been journeying, and the beginning of hilly and more broken ground. The soldiers gave a shout of joy at the sight; for hills are less favourable for cavalry, and it was the Persian cavalry that was causing them nearly all their trouble.

The road itself grew hilly now, as it entered this different country; but to the right the ground rose more steeply still up to what was, in fact, a mountain-ridge running parallel with the Greeks' march. For the time being the Greeks were concerned only with the lesser hills; but they were to find a use for the mountain itself before long.

The hilly road was bringing them less relief than they had hoped. As they marched down each slope, the Persian archers crowded to the ridge they had just left, and rained down arrows which, owing to their lower posi-

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tion, the Greeks could neither escape nor answer. And as they marched up the next slope, their heavy-armed stumbling troops were sorely harassed by the more agile and mounted Persians. This happened twice; but when they halted on the third crest, the Greek leaders sent some of their lighter troops up the actual mountain, to overlook the Persians' flank; after which the Persians no longer attacked the descending army, fearing to find themselves cut off between two forces of Greeks. They marched all day thus, finding the plan successful—the main body winding up and down through the lesser hills, the flanking-party high above on the mountain; but when they reached the village at night, they had to choose and appoint a number of surgeons, for there were many wounded.

Here they stayed three days; partly for the wounded's sake, but also because they had found a surprising amount of food and stores in the village; there was wheat-flour, and wine, and barley for the horses, all recently collected there for the use of the local satrap. The Greeks helped themselves gladly to the satrap's hoard, and on the fourth day set out again.

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Once more they were marching across flat country; and as soon as Tissaphernes overtook them today, they halted and made their camp. Hitherto, hard though it was, they had marched and fought at the same time; but today they were too much hampered—some being wounded, others carrying wounded, and still others burdened with these bearers' armour. The camp was hardly made before the Persians came up and opened their attack; but they soon found that to harass the Greeks on the march, and to fight squarely on equal terms, were two very different things. The Greeks routed them without trouble, and when evening came the Persians were glad enough to retreat to their own camp.

The Persians, all this while, never camped at a less distance from the Greeks than six miles, for fear of a night attack. At night the Persian host was troublesome to manage, for the same reason which gave them their advantage in the day-time—namely, their numerous cavalry. It was their custom not only to tether their horses, but also to hobble their feet lest they should slip their halters; and if an attack took place, then they had all these fastenings to undo in the dark, as well as their horses' harness and their own armour

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to put on. So even now when the Greeks were camped and settled, the Persians marched back for the usual six miles along the way they had come.

They were no sooner out of sight than the Greeks hastily struck camp and marched, covering as much as six miles before it became too dark for further progress. Thus they set out next day with twelve miles' start of the enemy, and by maintaining as good a pace as the number of wounded allowed, kept Tissaphernes out of sight for two whole days. But on the next night Tissaphernes, who of course had the advantage of knowing the country and what lay ahead, sent forward a strong body to make a forced march; and when day dawned the Greeks, to their dismay, saw Persians holding some high ground on the right of the road by which they must go. For they were now in hill-country again, and the spur occupied by the enemy overhung their route.

Cheirisophus, from his place at the vanguard, soon realised the menace to the Greek march, and sent back a message to Xenophon. "Come to the front with your light skirmishers."

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Xenophon dared not take the skirmishers from the rear, however; for looking round as the message was delivered to him, he saw that Tissaphernes with his main army was already in view. So he rode forward alone to find out what was the matter.

"You may see that for yourself," Cheirisophus said; and then he pointed out to him the spur overhanging their road, held by a force which was clearly strong enough to stop their march altogether. "We have no hope of passing until those are dislodged. But where are your skirmishers?"

Xenophon told how Tissaphernes had caught up with them once more, so that he dared not leave the rear of the army unguarded. "But we shall be caught between the two," he said, "unless we dislodge them very soon!"

The two generals stared doubtfully up at the hills. Then Xenophon noticed what they had failed to see before: namely, that the summit on which the enemy stood was not the summit of the whole mountain, but was overhung in turn by a higher peak; and that there was a way up this higher peak from where the Greeks had halted. "See, Cheirisophus!" he cried, "our best plan is to gain

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that peak as soon as we can; for if we do so, those who threaten our march will be unable to hold their ground. Will you stay here in charge, while I lead a climbing-party? Or if you want to lead the climbing-party yourself, I will stay here."

"I leave the choice to you," Cheirisophus said.

"Then I will climb!" cried Xenophon promptly, "since I am the younger man. But let me pick my troops from the vanguard here; it is too far to send back for my skirmishers from the rear, it will take too long!"

The other general agreed, and at once gave Xenophon his own bodyguard of three hundred picked men, besides other skirmishers, replacing them with troops from the middle of the square. Then the climbing-party started.

Now followed a most exciting race. The Persians on the hill at once saw what the Greeks intended, and lest they should be open to attack from above, began climbing towards the higher peak themselves. But they were too late in starting; and in spite of the Persians having less way to climb, it was soon evident to those below that the Greeks had a good chance of reaching the top as soon as their rivals. Down on the road both armies

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were cheering their own parties, just as though they were watching an even at some athletic sports; and Xenophon himself, riding alongside on his horse, cried eagerly:

"Remember, my lads, we are racing now for Greece! If we win, we shall have no more Persians to fight on the march towards our wives and children!"

"That is all very well for you," retorted one of the men. "For you are riding on a horse, while I have my shield to carry!"

Then at once Xenophon leapt down from his horse, pushed the man from the ranks, took his shield from him and began to climb on foot like the rest. But it was harder work for him, because of his heavy cavalry-armour; and yet, distressed as he was, he did not cease to encourage his fellow-soldiers. When the troops saw that, they began abusing and throwing stones at the man who had complained, until they forced him to resume his shield and his place in the ranks. Xenophon took the horse again, but it was soon too steep for riding. And at last with a final effort, scrambling and hauling themselves up the jagged rocks, they gained the summit before the enemy, and the race was won.

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The Persian climbers now turned back, and, no longer daring to hold their lower peak, rejoined the main army of Tissaphernes by the nearest way they could. The Greek host pressed on, passed the point which had been so dangerous, and descended the far side of the hill to encamp in a village beyond it; while Tissaphernes, leading his main army aside, disappeared in another direction. The Greeks once more found plenty of provisions in the village, which lay near the bank of the Tigris; but that evening, as they were scattered over the plain driving in some cattle which they had found by the riverside, the Persians suddenly appeared by a roundabout route and cut off some of the foragers. They also began to fire some villages, rather than let the Greeks have the food which was stored there. Cheirisophus led a party to the rescue; and Xenophon, riding through the returning Greeks, encouraged them, crying:

"See how the enemy now admit that the land is ours! For when we made the truce, we agreed not to burn any villages; but now the Persians are doing so themselves, as in an enemy's country. Let them see that wherever they have stored supplies for themselves, we shall march and take them." Then he turned

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to Cheirisophus. "I think," he said, "we should prevent this burning, as in defence of our own property."

But Cheirisophus disagreed. "No! Let us also burn as much as we can, and they will cease the sooner!"

Then followed a council of the generals, who were in doubt what to do. On one side were high mountains; and on the other a river of such depth that they could not touch bottom with their spears. At this point a Rhodian came forward.

"I have a plan to put the army across," he said, "if you will give me what I need for it, and a good reward." And when the generals asked him what he needed, he replied: "Two thousand skins of animals, sewn up into bags; and the ropes of the baggage-cattle. We can blow up the bags with air and make floats of them: then anchor all the floats with stones, in a line: lay wood and earth on them: and so make a bridge from bank to bank, on which the troops can march over."

The generals thought that this was a clever idea, but doubted if it could succeed; for they saw many cavalry on the far bank who would prevent the bridge from being moored there. So they decided rather to return on their

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tracks towards Babylon, in which direction there were still some villages left unburnt. This they began to do next day, when they had burnt the villages where they had just been camping. The Persians did not attack while they were doing this, but watched from a distance, as though they were wondering what the Greeks had in mind. Meanwhile the generals held another council to which the Persian prisoners were summoned and questioned about the surrounding country; it being needful that the Greeks should make up their minds at once which way they were to take, and what chance they might have of finding food on the journey.

CHAPTER XXIV

The Greeks' chief trouble now was their lack of a map. But the prisoners, encouraged no doubt by the threat of torture, were able to tell them a good deal. Southward, they said, the road along which the Greeks had come led back to Babylon. Eastward lay Susa, the King's capital, where he was said to spend the summer and spring. The road across the river towards the west, which the Greeks might have taken had they been able to make a bridge, led homeward to Ionia; while the

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north road went on across the mountains into the land of the Carduchi*.

"And who are the Carduchi?" the generals next asked.

"They are a mountain-folk," the prisoners said, "very warlike, and not obedient to the King. Once the King sent an army of a hundred and twenty thousand against them; but so perilous was that country, that it never returned."

The generals now ordered that those who knew each road should be kept separate, but did not say which road they intended to take. In private, however, they had already decided that the north road was the only possible way for them; for the prisoners said that if they could get past the Carduchi, they would then come to Armenia, a fertile country; and that from there it would be easy for them to go where they liked.

They therefore sacrificed, so that when time served they might resume the march without any delay; they also ordered that the troops should pack up their baggage before going to rest, and be ready to follow whenever the captains roused them. For the chief

* The Modern Kurdistan.

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danger, as it seemed to them, was that the Persian army might get first to the mountain-pass, and prevent their escape northwards.

So in the last watch before dawn, when there was still enough of the night left for them to cross the rest of the plain under cover of darkness, the troops rose at a given signal and marched silently away. They reached the hills by daybreak ; and here Cheirisophus took all the light-armed skirmishers in the vanguard with him, while Xenophon brought up the rear with heavy-armed troops alone ; for the light skirmishers would be the better troops for storming the heights, if they met any resistance ; and there seemed little danger that the Persian army would now attack them from behind.

Cheirisophus, however, succeeded in crossing the first range of mountains without having to fight, for the Carduchi had no warning of the army's approach. They then descended towards some villages which lay in the valleys beyond, the astonished Carduchi fleeing before them with their wives and children, and taking to the hills. The Greeks found plenty of food and other stores in the villages; they would have bought it from the Carduchi if they could, for they hoped to make friends with

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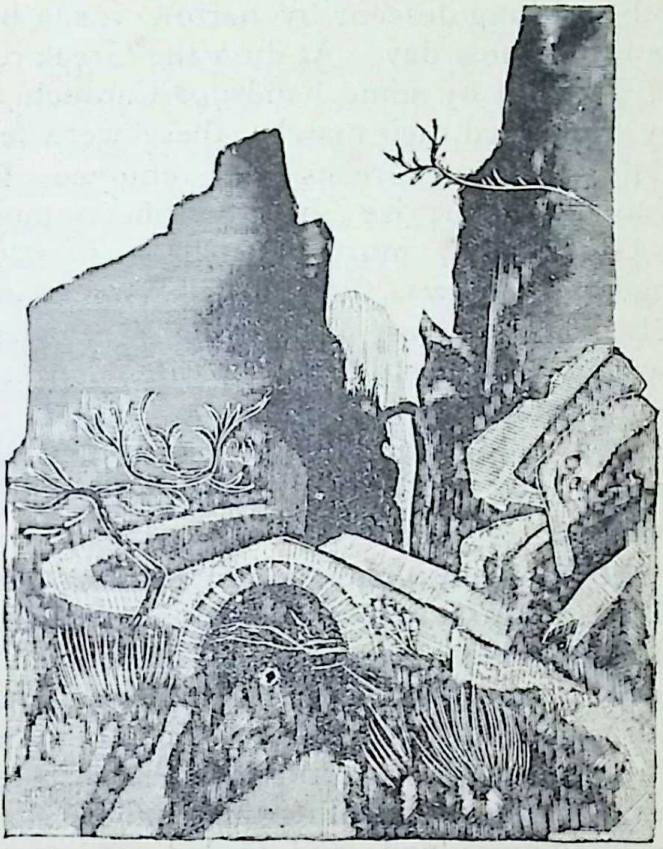
them, knowing that they were in revolt against the Great King; but there was no one



THE CARDUCHIAN MOUNTAIN PASSES

left to sell; so the Greeks took what food they needed and refrained from destruction and

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plundering, so as to show the Carduchi that they meant to cross their country as friends.

Darkness now fell again; for the steep climb and long descent by narrow roads had taken the whole day. At dusk the Greek rear was attacked by some bands of Carduchi as they completed their march; these were few, luckily, for the Greeks still enjoyed the advantage of surprise; had there been more, the Greek army must have been in great danger; but as it was, they were able to encamp safely in the villages. All through the night, however, they could see bonfires on the mountain-tops, which the tribes lighted to summon help; and they guessed that the next day they would meet with more serious resistance.

At dawn the generals and captains met, and resolved to repeat a precaution which they had taken before—namely, to leave behind them everything which was not needful, and to turn loose even the slaves which they had captured from Tissaphernes in the last few weeks; for these made their march more slow, consumed more food, and needed soldiers to look after them who might henceforth be better employed as fighters. The troops were not too pleased at having to leave their plunder;

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but the officers were insistent, posting themselves beside a narrow gap when the march began, to see that their orders had been obeyed.

All day the Greeks kept on their way. Sometimes they had to fight a little to beat off an attack, at others they had leisure for a short spell of resting. On the next day a great storm sprang up; but they had no choice but to keep on the move, being short of provisions. The Carduchi began to press them more steadily, coming close up behind them where the passes narrowed and using their bows and slings. Xenophon was thus in the same plight as when Tissaphernes was following them—halting, attacking, and then hurrying on again to catch up with the rest. Most often, when he sent word that he must stop to beat off an attack, Cheirisophus waited for him; but on one occasion, at last, he did not halt, but sent back word to Xenophon that he must follow as best he could. Xenophon guessed that something was amiss at the head of the column; but he had no time to go forward and find out what it was, and so the rear-guard's march became like a flight. It was less easy for the heavy troops to defend themselves under such conditions; and two brave

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soldiers who were killed had to be left unburied, which to the Greeks was always a deep disgrace. Xenophon went straight to Cheirisophus when they camped that night, and complained bitterly of the way in which his troops had been treated. But the other general said:

"Look ahead, and you will see in what a dilemma I was placed. Those mountains cannot be crossed save by that one steep road and you may see what hordes of the enemy are now massing above it, to dispute our passage. I pressed on to try and get there first; for the guides tell me there is no other way."

"I have two prisoners of the Carduchi, however," Xenophon replied. "We laid an ambush when the enemy followed us, by which we were able to rest ourselves, and to kill some of them; but we were also anxious to take some alive, they are likely to be better than our Persians."

The two prisoners were now brought in, and were questioned separately whether they knew of any other road than the one which Cheirisophus had pointed out to Xenophon. One declared there was no second road; and as he would say nothing more in spite of

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threats, Cheirisophus had him put to death before his companion's eyes.

The other, terrified, said that there was a second road, but that his friend had lied because his married daughter lived near to it. It was good enough, however, for even the baggage-animals to pass, and he would lead the Greeks by that way.

"What points of danger are there on it?" the generals asked.

"There is one height which you must occupy with a small party in advance," the prisoner replied. "If not, the whole army can be stopped there."

Thereupon the generals called a council of all officers, told them what lay ahead, and asked if anyone were willing to prove his bravery by joining the advance-party. Four volunteered at once, assuring the generals that their example would draw others. So, indeed, it proved; and by the afternoon, when they were given a meal, the party were numerous enough to set out.

Rain was falling heavily as they went forward from the main host, about two thousand strong, with the guide firmly bound in their midst. And at the same time Xenophon,

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taking another strong force from the main army, marched straight towards the visible pass, to make the enemy think that they were all going that way and to divert attention from the two thousand. He did not intend to force the visible pass, however, for he knew that it was too strongly defended; it was his plan, when he had drawn the attention of the Carduchi, to retreat to the plain again for the night: until at dawn the two thousand, having gained the heights, should give a trumpet signal to the rest, and attack the defenders from above.

Soon the two thousand had passed out of sight in the rain, on their roundabout road. Xenophon's company meanwhile, advancing openly, reached a ravine which they would have to cross before the ascent of the visible pass began. Here the Carduchi were awaiting them; and when they saw the Greeks prepare to descend the ravine, they began rolling down huge rocks, each big enough for a waggon-load, which struck and split on other rocks and flew in all directions as though hurled by a giant's sling. There would have been no hope of crossing the ravine, even had the Greeks wanted to; but the different captains made a feint of trying other routes, and thus

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kept the enemy's attention fully occupied until darkness fell. Then they slipped back unobserved, and halted to make their supper. But it was clear that they had frightened the Carduchi, who thought they were still meaning to cross the ravine; for all night the Greeks could hear the great stones rumbling down.

Meanwhile the two thousand, whom the guide led by the more roundabout road, surprised a picket of the Carduchi round their camp-fire, killed some, and put the rest to flight. Then they themselves encamped, thinking that they had gained the height which commanded the pass; they were not very far short of it, certainly; but it was not till daylight that they found their mistake.

There was a mist upon the hills when the dawn appeared; so that the Greeks, who had now realised there was a party of Carduchi still commanding the main pass ahead of them, were able to creep quite close to them before being seen. When they caught sight of one another the Greeks' trumpet rang out, and they rushed on the foe. The Carduchi fled; and at the same time the main army under Cheirisophus, hearing the trumpet-call, set off at once along the straight track. Some of the captains also

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led their men up the rugged mountain-side, where each happened to be, the soldiers helping one another and drawing one another up by their spears: and these were the first to join the two thousand who were already on the heights. Xenophon took his heavy troops by the roundabout road which the two thousand had used, since that was easier for the baggage animals in his care. At one point this road had been occupied by the enemy since the previous night, and there was even a danger that the party of Xenophon might be cut off from the rest; but after a little fighting at long range, the Greeks put them to flight.

A second hill was captured in the same way; and then a third. But at each summit Xenophon had to leave some of his troops behind, for fear the Carduchi should slip back round his flank and attack the long train of baggage-animals. This meant continuous fighting, which grew harder as the advancing force became less; nor could even Xenophon's prudence altogether save the garrison of the first hill-top, who were attacked when Xenophon was now far ahead, and some of whom were killed.

By this time Xenophon's vanguard was in touch with the main body under Cheiri-

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sophus; but the bringing-up of the rear was attended by great danger. As the last troops descended from each summit in turn, the Carduchi pressed after them, rolling down more stones. Xenophon's own life was in peril here, for his shield-bearer deserted him; but a soldier called Eurylochus came to his aid, and soon afterwards the entire Greek army was once more united.

CHAPTER XXV

The Greeks had now had ample chance to test the fighting powers of the Carduchi, and very dangerous foes they had found them. They were more agile than the Greeks, since they carried nothing heavier than bows or slings, and after making a swift attack they could escape without loss. They were fine archers, too, their bows being four and a half feet long and their arrows over three feet. When they drew back the string, they planted the left foot against the lower end of the bow, and could drive an arrow through the shield or breastplate of a Greek. So stout were these shafts, indeed, that the Greeks used to pick them up and fasten a thong to them, to use them as javelins.

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The Greeks had suffered so heavily during these days of fighting with the Carduchi, that they were glad to call a truce in order to recover their dead. This was granted, and the Greeks were given leisure to carry out the burials, on condition that they should free the Carduchian prisoner whom they were using for a guide. Henceforth they would have to find their own way as best they could; but the Carduchi would not grant a truce on any other terms, so they had to agree. Due north they went, taking their reckoning by the sun and the stars, and still fighting the Carduchi who lost no chance of harassing them, either in narrow passes of the hills, or where cliffs overhung the column. At last they came down into the plain of the river Centrites, and very glad they were to see flat country again. They had been seven days passing through that mountainous land, and in that time had suffered more than all that Tissaphernes and the King had been able to do against them. Now, as they camped near the river in villages where they had all the food they could need, they rejoiced that the worst part of their journey was over, and that the morrow would see them on the farther bank, in Armenia.

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Yet they had rejoiced too soon. For when they made their way at dawn to the river-bank, they saw on the other side a body of cavalry in full armour, and on the slopes above another force of foot, ready to stop them from entering Armenia; these were Armenians, Mardians and Chaldeans, raised by the Armenian satrap Orontes. None the less, the Greek army prepared to cross; but the water rose above their breasts when they tried: and as the river-bed was slippery, and the current washed their shields aside and left them exposed to the arrows and stones of the enemy, they had to give up the attempt and encamp by the edge of the stream.

Meanwhile a strong force of the Carduchi had appeared on the hills behind them, clearly waiting to fall upon their rear if they still tried to cross. Once more the Greeks were in the depths of despair; for it seemed now that they were caught between two foes, with no hope of escape.

That night, however, Xenophon again had a dream. He thought that he lay bound in fetters: but that they fell from him of their own accord, leaving him free to go wherever he wanted. As we have seen already, Xenophon believed in dreams, like the rest of the

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Greeks; and he related this one to his friend Cheirisophus. "Do not we ourselves lie here in fetters?" he cried hopefully. "I think my dream may be an omen of escape and good fortune!"

Cheirisophus thought so too; calling the other generals together, he made sacrifices; and once more the omens were favourable at the very first. So the troops breakfasted in better spirits than they had felt on the night before.

Now it was known to everyone that their general Xenophon might be approached at all times, even though he were asleep, by anyone having important news to tell him; so as he sat at breakfast two young men came running into the camp. They had been out to gather fuel at some distance, they said, and had approached the river at a rocky place which could not be patrolled by the enemy's cavalry. "As we drew near," they told him, "we saw on the other bank an old man and some women, hiding some bundles in a cave of the rocks. This made us think that we might cross here; for the women had clearly chosen such a spot as being safe from the soldiery. We waded in, prepared to swim, with our knives in our hands. But to our surprise, we

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found that we reached the other side before we were wet to the waist. Then we came back at once to tell you."

At that, Xenophon looked across at Cheirisophus; for here was his dream fulfilled. The generals lost no time. Waiting only to pour out a libation of gratitude to the gods, of the wine they were drinking, they called a council of their colleagues to discuss how they might most safely cross the river at the young men's ford, in such a way as to outwit the enemy in front, and suffer no damage from those in the rear. They soon decided that Cheirisophus, as before, should lead over the vanguard, Xenophon waiting on the nearer bank with his heavy troops, till the baggage was safely across; but before Xenophon should follow, they had a stratagem which they intended to try.

First the whole army started off together, the young men guiding them, to the ford which lay less than half a mile upstream. The enemy followed opposite; for though the ford was at a point too rocky for them to charge on horseback, they could quite easily make their way along the edge of the stream. When the Greeks reached the ford they halted and laid down their arms. And then

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Cheirisophus, stripping off his cloak and putting a garland on his head (as the Spartans did when they sacrificed), stepped forward into the stream with his captains to right and left of him. At the same moment priests slew animals over the water, as a sacrifice to the river-god; and when the omens were found favourable, the whole host broke into their battle-hymn, and plunged forward with a shout.

This was the moment when the stratagem which the Greek generals had planned was to be put into effect. As the troops led by Cheirisophus advanced, Xenophon took the most active of his rear-guard and marched downstream as swiftly as possible, to the point where they had first thought of crossing. This manoeuvre struck fear into the enemy's cavalry; for they thought the divided forces of the Greeks would catch them in a trap. They saw Cheirisophus already nearly across, and Xenophon ahead of them on the other bank, making for the lower ford; their courage failed them, and they fled headlong to escape from the narrow river-bank on to higher ground. Some of the lighter-armed of the Greeks pursued; but the heavy infantry under Cheirisophus marched straight up on to

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the slopes towards the Persian infantry. The latter, however, showed no more courage than the rest, and fled likewise, thus losing the strong position which they had held overlooking the stream.

Xenophon meanwhile had kept an eye on what was happening behind him. He saw that Cheirisophus was safely across; but he saw also, as he had expected, that the Carduchi were now streaming down from the hills to cut off the baggage-train which was following Cheirisophus' party over the ford. He therefore turned his troops and came back at top speed, to protect the passage; bidding some of his captains to wheel their companies by twenty-fives and to face the advancing Carduchi in battle-array, while the rest faced the river.

The Carduchi still kept on; for they saw that the rear-guard were but few, and thought they could overwhelm them. Cheirisophus meanwhile had sent back some slingers and archers to help Xenophon; but the latter signalled to them not to cross, but to stay at their own edge of the stream with their weapons ready. Then, as the Carduchi drew near, a trumpet sounded and the infantry of Xenophon charged.

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This was more than the Carduchi had expected. They broke and fled. The trumpet sounded once again, and they ran harder than ever. But at the second signal, as they had been forewarned, the Greeks turned right-about and ran back to the ford. And by the time the Carduchi had discovered the ruse and stopped running, the Greek rear-guard were all safely over.

CHAPTER XXVI

The Greeks had now entered the country of Armenia; and a very pleasant land they found it, after the hardships they had undergone in crossing that of the Carduchi. Just now there were no more steep mountains to be passed, but plains and gently sloping hills. Best of all, there was no fighting to be done, once they had frightened off the force that had awaited them by the river Centrites. Indeed there were hardly any villages at first, since the Armenians were afraid of being raided by the Carduchi if they settled too near the border; but the Greeks found a village towards evening, fifteen miles past the river, where there was plenty of food.

Thus for a while the Greeks enjoyed a much-needed rest from the attacks of their

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foes. They were not through their troubles by any means, as they were to find later on; but for six days they could march peaceably from village to village, with no one to challenge them.

On the third day they passed round the sources of their old obstacle, the river Tigris, which was now quite small. In the three days that followed they marched forty-five miles and crossed the Teleboas, a little river whose beauty they had leisure to admire, with villages nestling on its banks; and here at last they had warning of some possible enemies.

The satrap in this part of the country was Tiribazus, a close friend of the King, by whom he was honoured with the duty of helping him to his horse when they were together. Tiribazus met them near the Teleboas with a squadron of cavalry, and sent forward an interpreter to seek speech with the Greek leaders. As he had met them peaceably, the generals thought it best to hear what he had to say.

"I am ready to make a truce," the satrap told them, "and I will undertake to let you have such food as you need without hindering you, so long as you do no harm to the villages

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through which you pass." The Greeks agreed to this, and the truce was made.

During the next three days they advanced over a plain for another forty-five miles. Tiribazus seemed disposed to keep the truce; but they were not quite at their ease concerning him, for they observed that he was following with his troops about a mile behind. They hoped, however, that he was doing this only to make sure that they kept their part of the bargain. On the third evening they camped outside some villages where again there was plenty of food; but there was a heavy fall of snow during that night, and in the morning some of them decided to transfer their quarters to the actual villages, since Tiribazus and his force had now disappeared, and there seemed little fear of any sudden attack on account of the snow.

But that day some of the soldiers who had strayed away from the rest returned with news that they had sighted an army, and that a number of camp-fires had been visible during the night. The generals therefore thought it safer for the whole army to camp together again, especially as the weather seemed to be clearing up; but a still heavier fall of snow took place at night, covering both

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men and arms as they lay on the ground. In the morning the baggage-animals were numbed, and seemed reluctant to stand up; for while they lay, they were kept warmer by the snow that had settled on them. The men too were sluggish and disheartened by the bitter cold; but once again their general was found ready to set them an example; for Xenophon, rising without his cloak, began with his own hands to chop some wood for a fire. The rest soon followed, and began to make fires for themselves. They also found they could anoint themselves against the cold with an ointment which the villagers showed them, made from hog's lard, sesamum, bitter almonds and turpentine; and they soon grew accustomed to use this instead of their usual oil.

They now decided they would have to make their quarters in the villages after all; and having gained the generals' leave, they went off with great joy and shouting to the friendly cottages. Some of the Greeks, however, had fired the cottages where they had previously lodged, on being ordered to quit them; and these now paid the penalty for breaking the truce, by having to camp still in the open air.

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The generals themselves were inclined to doubt the wisdom of returning to the villages. So that night, for safety's sake, they sent a body of men under a trusty officer to the hills, where the stragglers had said that fires were visible. Returning, the officer brought news both good and bad; he had seen no fires, he said; but he brought back a captive he had taken, armed with a Persian bow and quiver and a short battleaxe; this man confessed he was a Persian, sent from the army of Tiribazus to get food.

"How large is your army?" asked the generals. "And for what purpose is it gathered together?"

Then the truth came out. The man admitted that Tiribazus had, beside his own troops, some others hired from neighbouring provinces: and that his object was to attack the Greeks at a certain narrow gorge in the mountains ahead, through which they were bound to go.

Thus once again the Greeks found that a Persian truce was no safeguard; though indeed they could hardly grumble at the satrap's action, since they had fired some of the cottages where they had lodged. The generals saw there was no time to be lost.

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Leaving a strong guard in the villages to protect their camp, they pressed forward with the rest of the host, and with the prisoner as guide. Before long they found the camp of Tiribazus, up in the hills; and the light skirmishers, not waiting for the support of the heavier troops, charged forward with a shout to attack it. The Persians, hearing the noise, did not pause to defend themselves, but fled: several were killed in the pursuit, and a score of horses taken; but the chief prize was the tent of Tiribazus himself, where they found drinking-vessels and couches with silver feet, as well as some servants who said that they were Tiribazus' bakers and cup-bearers. By this time the heavy infantry had come up; and when their officers heard what had happened, they resolved to march back without delay for fear their own camp should be attacked. The trumpets sounded a retreat, and the army returned to its headquarters the same day.

CHAPTER XXVII

Next morning they made an early start; for though the Persians had fled yesterday, there was a fear that they might rally in time to occupy the gorge again, before the Greek

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army could pass through it. So they set out through deep snow, baggage and all, and by their promptness managed to get past the danger-point without any sign from the enemy. That night they camped beyond the gorge, and for the next three days pressed on as best they could through a desolate tract of country. Most of the manuscripts of Xenophon's book say that they covered another forty-five miles during these three days; but scholars who know the country think that the Greeks could not have travelled so quickly in such deep snow; and it seems likely that another manuscript, which gives five miles as the distance, is the authentic version. Whichever the distance was, these three days brought the Greeks to the river Euphrates, which they crossed easily, waist-deep, since like the Tigris it was here not far from its source.

There followed another three days' march, over a level plain now, but with the snow as deep as ever: of which the third day was the worst they had yet spent, since the north wind blew full against them making them numb with cold. One of the priests advised that they should sacrifice to Boreas, as the Greeks named the god of the North Wind;

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and certainly, when they had done so, the violence of the gale seemed to abate. The snow was now six feet deep, says Xenophon: and the weather so cold that many slaves and animals, and even thirty of the hardy soldiers, were frozen to death. The one thing that saved the army that night, was the fact that there was plenty of wood at the place of encampment. The vanguard lit huge fires which burned all night; but the late-comers found no wood left, nor would the luckier ones admit these stragglers to their fires, until they parted with a share of the food they had brought. Thus they shared out among each other what each man had; and in the places where the fires were made, the snow was melted into great pits which reached down to the ground. This was how they were able to perceive how deep the drifts had been.

Day dawned again, and still they marched on through snow. Many were falling sick now of an ailment whose symptoms Xenophon describes vividly; the sufferers fell down benumbed, and could not even stand until they had something to eat. But once more the Athenian general helped and encouraged them, searching the baggage for any food there was, and sending the stronger men with

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it to the aid of their comrades; till the sick men rose one by one and managed to struggle on.

Just before dark Cheirisophus and the vanguard came to a village, where they found women fetching water from a spring outside the wall. These women had no idea who the Greeks were; so when they questioned them, the Greeks replied through an interpreter that they were Persian troops, on their way from the King to the satrap.

"He is not here, but about three miles away," the women replied.

That distance seemed safe enough to the Greeks, as it was so late; so they went with the water-carriers inside the wall, and found the head-man of the village. With him Cheirisophus made terms, and encamped with as many of the army as had struggled so far; but the rest, too exhausted to complete the day's march, had to spend the night in the open without food or fires: and there some of them died. They were harassed also by some Persians who, having recovered from their flight, had now formed themselves into a body and were pursuing the rear-guard, seizing such baggage-animals as were left behind and quarrelling among themselves for the spoil.

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They also captured some poor fellows who had gone blind in the glare of the snow, or whose toes had been mortified by frost-bite. But the rest found that they could save their sight from the glare, if they kept something black before them as they marched: and that they suffered less from frozen feet if they kept moving constantly, and took off their shoes at night. If they slept in their shoes, the straps worked into their flesh and the soles were frozen; for when their old shoes wore out, they had made sandals of raw hide from the skins of freshly-killed oxen.

But a good number of the men were left behind all the same, so hard were their sufferings. Some of them found a patch of naked earth; they thought the snow was thawing there, though really the patch was due to vapour from a neighbouring fountain; so they turned aside from the rest, and, flinging themselves down, refused to go any farther. Xenophon, bringing up the rear, tried hard to persuade them not to be left behind, saying that the Persians had collected again and were pursuing in great numbers. They still declined to move; and when he grew angry at last, they begged him to kill them where they lay, as they could not go forward. When

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Xenophon found he could do nothing with them, he thought the only safeguard was to scare off, if possible, the pursuing enemy, lest they should fall upon these wretched men and slaughter them as they lay. It was now dark, and the Persians were making a good deal of noise as they advanced, for they were still quarrelling with one another about the spoil they had taken. Xenophon mustered those of his rear-guard who were still fit for action, and led a charge; while the sick men helped as best they could by shouting suddenly, and by clashing their spears against their shields. The result of this bold move was what the Greeks had learned to expect from their cowardly enemy; for the Persians disappeared into the snow, and the Greeks heard no more of them.

Xenophon now marched on; for with darkness already fallen, he dared not allow his rear-guard to become detached from the rest of the host. But before leaving the sick men, he promised to send a rescue-party back to help them next day. He had not led his rear-guard half a mile, however, before they came on more soldiers resting by the side of the track, covered up with snow, and with no sentries posted. Xenophon ordered them to

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be roused and to march on with him; but they assured him that they were not stragglers, but that the whole army had come to a halt.

Hardly believing this, Xenophon sent ahead some light-armed men to find what had stopped the march; but these returned confirming what the others had said, namely that the army had halted for no obstacle but fatigue, and lay resting. He therefore had no choice but to halt too, camping out in the open by the side of the road, and setting sentries to give warning of any renewed pursuit. They had no fire, and they had tested no supper: so they were glad indeed when dawn appeared, and Xenophon sent some of them back to rouse the sick men and bid them march.

Just then arrived a party which had been sent back by Cheirisophus to see how the rear-guard was faring. These were in better condition than Xenophon's men, since they had spent the night in the villages. Xenophon therefore gave them the sick men to help on the road, and led his own troops forward for a couple of miles to the village where Cheirisophus was. The two generals now exchanged news, and decided that it was safe enough to lodge the troops in the villages; so while Cheirisophus remained where he was,

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the other generals drew lots for the several villages, and led off their detachments to billet them.

When Xenophon reached the village which had been allotted to him, he found that an Athenian captain had already occupied it in his name, having taken the villagers by surprise ; he had made prisoners of the head-man and his daughter, and of a number of young horses which were waiting to be sent to the King. But Xenophon realised that the villagers were ready enough to make friends, and so hastened to assure the head-man that no harm was intended towards him. He succeeded so well that he persuaded the head-man to sit down to supper with him; and so pleasant was it to find strangers who did not regard the Greeks as their foes, that he and the head-man were soon talking together like old comrades. The chief told Xenophon that his daughter was only nine days married, and that her husband had gone out to hunt hares and knew nothing of the Greeks' arrival. But Xenophon soon convinced him that there was no cause for alarm, and that the Greeks would reward him handsomely if he helped them by guiding them on their way to the next tribe.

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So they made terms together, and the chief showed his goodwill by pointing out to Xenophon where some wine was stored. The Greeks found much to interest them in the villages, under the chief's guidance. The houses were underground because of the cold, with narrow openings like the mouth of a well. They had good store of wheat, barley, vegetables, and a kind of beer which they drank through straws—a pleasant liquor when one grew used to it, but so strong that it had to be mixed with water.

That night the troops rested in more comfort than they had known for a long while. In the morning Xenophon took the chief to Cheirisophus; as they passed through the villages, he turned aside to see how the troops had fared, and found them everywhere feasting and enjoying themselves; nor would the kindly villagers let him pass without inviting him to join them. Their friendliness amazed him; in each house, lamb, kid, pork, veal and fowl were on the table together; and whenever any villager wished to pay a compliment to a Greek, he took him to a great bowl at which he had to stoop and lap like an ox.

When the two reached Cheirisophus, they found that he and his men were being no less

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well entertained; for they sat feasting, garlanded with hay in place of the flowers which the Greeks used to wear at home at their banquets, and they were being waited on by Armenian boys. The chief now gave the generals more details of the province in which they had arrived, and pointed out the road to the next country; in return, Xenophon presented the old man with his horse, and asked him to sacrifice it, later on, to the sun. The young horses he shared out among the officers; and the chief showed them how to tie little bags round their animals' feet, to prevent them from sinking too far into the snow.

CHAPTER XXVIII

The Greeks were glad to rest for a whole week in these friendly villages, after the bitter days through which they had passed. But on the eighth morning they prepared to set out again. Xenophon handed over the chief to Cheirisophus, keeping his son as hostage to ensure that the old man should guide them faithfully. But before breaking camp, he kept his promise to the chief by bidding his soldiers fill the old man's house with provisions. Then the chief led the vanguard through the snow, walking at liberty.

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At first all went well. But on the afternoon of the third day Cheirisophus grew suspicious, since they had come so far and still found no villages. The chief replied that there were none in that part of the land. Cheirisophus became angry; and an unhappy quarrel ensued, in which the Greek so far forgot himself as to strike the old man. This was foolish enough; but Cheirisophus then committed an equally stupid blunder in neglecting to put the chief under arrest. As a result the Greeks found, next morning, that their guide had disappeared. This error caused the only quarrel between Xenophon and Cheirisophus on the whole of the march; but it was too late for reproaches now, and for the next seven days the Greeks had to make their way as best they could, unguided.

Their way was not too hard, however, with the sun and the stars to lead them; and they did fifteen miles a day for all that week, till they came to the river Phasis. Another two days' march brought them to the northern boundary of Armenia—a range of mountains, where they perceived the tribesmen drawn up in the pass to oppose them. These were the Chalybes, of whom their late guide had told them; and they had with them as allies two other tribes, the Taochi and the Phasians.

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When Cheirisophus saw them massed against the skyline, he halted nearly three miles short of the pass that he might not approach them in the column-of-march. Then, while the rest of the army came up, company by company, and formed line-of-battle, he called a council of his officers and spoke as follows :

"You see the enemy have occupied the pass over those mountains, and we shall have to plan out our best line of attack. For my part, I think it best to let the men take their dinner, while we decide whether we are to advance today or tomorrow."

But Cleanor cried at once : "Oh, let us storm the heights today, as soon as we have dined! For if we sit here idle, the enemy who are watching us will take courage, and will most likely then persuade more tribes to join them."

Xenophon disagreed. "I think," he said, "that if we have to fight, we should take care to fight to the best advantage; but is there no chance of passing over those hills without loss of life ? The range, so far as we can see, runs for six miles ; but the tribes do not seem to be on the look-out for us, except on the actual road. Would it not be a better plan to seize

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some unguarded part of the range, unobserved, rather than march against the single point which we see so strongly defended? Even a steep road with no fighting is better than a level one with enemies round it ; even at night, if we are left in peace, we can see better than by day if engaged in skirmishing; while a rough track beneath our feet is better than a smooth one where rocks are being showered against us! We should not find it very hard to steal a way for ourselves, for we can march in darkness, and at such a distance from the enemy that we shall not be heard,……" And then Xenophon laughed; for like the rest of them, he was in high spirits owing to the progress they had made since they outdistanced Tiribazus. "Indeed, if it comes to *stealing* a way, I need have no fears for our success! For I am told, Cheirisophus, that you Spartans are trained in stealing from your boyhood, and that among you it is no disgrace but an honour to steal what the law does not forbid, provided only that you are not found out. Well, now is the time for you to show your skill, and to trick the enemy!"

But Cheirisophus laughed too, and had a retort ready. "They say that you Athenians also," he replied, "are very clever at stealing

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the public money, in spite of the risk you run: and that your best men steal most—that is, if your magistrates are your best men. So that you too may now help us and give proof of your upbringing."

"Well then," said Xenophon, going straight to his plan, "I am ready to march with my rear-guard as soon as we have supped, and capture the hills. I have guides too; for my men ambushed some of these tribes' spies on the march, who say that the mountains can be crossed, and that indeed they are grazed over by the tribes' cattle; so that if once we capture any point, there will be tracks for our baggage-train to pass over. Nor are the enemy likely to stay where they are, if they find us as high; for you see now how they refuse to come down to fight us on the level."

Cheirisophus had only one fault to find with his plan. He thought that Xenophon could not be safely spared from guarding the rear, but that the climbing-party should be led by some lesser officers. He soon found volunteers, who promised to light a number of fires as soon as they gained the top. The whole host then dined; and before dark Cheirisophus led them a mile forward towards the defended pass, so that the enemy might think he meant to attack them there.

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Night fell, and the climbing-party marched silently away into the darkness, while the remainder of the host rested where they were. There was a time of anxious waiting; but at last the watchers from below saw points of fire appear on the crest of the hills, and knew that the position had been gained. The enemy saw those signals too, and guessed what they meant; for sounds of alarm and bustle came down from the pass, and before long they too lit many fires to safeguard them against a surprise attack.

At dawn Cheirisophus sacrificed and marched up the road, while those above advanced along the ridge to close in on the enemy. Some of the latter went out along the ridge to meet them, but most stayed where they were in the pass. Before the main bodies met, however, those on the ridge were at close quarters, and the Greeks put the tribesmen to rout. And now the Greek skirmishers were running up the road to attack the pass, Cheirisophus following not far behind with the heavy infantry, when the defenders, seeing the rout of their friends, gave up all hope of keeping out the Greeks and fled in disorder. Not many were killed; but a great number threw away their shields, which the Greeks

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split in pieces with their swords so as to make them useless. With other captured arms they built a "trophy" on the crest of the ridge—that is, a monument to mark their victory: and after sacrificing, marched down into the plain to some well-stocked villages.

CHAPTER XXIX

The victory at the pass had so impressed the tribesmen, that though they might have harassed the Greeks on their march, they did nothing to hinder them; and the Greeks covered ninety miles in the next five days,—a faster speed than they had so far made on the retreat. They now reached the country of the Taochi, and a new kind of difficulty; for though the Taochi did not attack their march, they had removed all food to fortresses built on the peaks of their hills, so that the army was in danger of starvation. To storm such fortresses was a very different task from forcing a way into villages; but at last Cheirisophus, having no choice between an attack or starvation, turned aside to assault a fortress where there were no houses, but where a number of tribesmen had taken refuge with large herds of beasts. The Greeks could not surround this place, for there was a river about it; but they

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began to attack in waves, each company being relieved, as it grew tired, by the next. By and by, Xenophon and the rear-guard came up.

"You come in good time," exclaimed Cheirisophus. "For we have no food, and must take this place or starve."

The two then conferred together, Cheirisophus showing Xenophon what had hindered him from already storming the fort. "The only way to it is that which you see. But when our men advance, the defenders roll stones from that overhanging rock, and you may judge the result—" and he pointed at some Greeks whose legs and ribs had been broken.

Xenophon stared up at the fort in silence. "There are not many of them up there," he said at last: "and still fewer are armed. When they have used up all their stones, there will be nothing to prevent us from advancing. Look at those great pine-trees too! A man could shelter behind each of those, and laugh at the stones."

"But after the trees end, there is a bare space," Cheirisophus pointed out.

"Not more than fifty feet. When the stones cease, we must cross that at a run."

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"But as soon as our men go near the trees, the stones come down like an avalanche!"

Xenophon laughed. "So much the better! They will be finished the sooner. But come, let us advance to the edge of the open space. I think I see how we can cross it presently; but if not, we can easily retreat."

So they went forward with some other officers to the near edge of the pine-wood; next, about seventy men slipped into the wood itself—not in a body, but each taking cover as seemed best to him. And then Callimachus, a brave captain, began to play a sort of daring game against the watchers above; for he kept slipping forward from his tree, and then dodging back; and each time he did so more than ten cartloads of stones came thundering down. His game was only to entice the enemy into wasting their stones; but some other captains, watching him jealously, feared lest he might dash right across the open space, and outdo them in glory by being the first to reach the fort. So as the avalanche lessened they watched their chance, and suddenly all dashed across the gap together, Callimachus with them. Thus, urged on by their rivalry, this handful of brave men took the fort; for

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they had no sooner scrambled over its wall than the stoning ceased, and the tribesmen showed no more resistance.

But a dreadful sight followed. The tribesmen had probably made up their minds that the strangers, once in, would be merciless in vengeance; they had no means of escape, save that approach up which the Greeks were streaming; and as the victors entered the fort, they saw women fling their children over the precipice and themselves after them. The men did the same. One of them, wearing a rich cloak, was caught and held by a Greek; but the man dragged him forward, and down they both went together to their death. Thus the Greeks took few prisoners here, but a great number of animals.

They now advanced for seven days through the land of the Chalybes. Xenophon gives the distance as a hundred and fifty miles: if he is right, this part of the march was even more remarkable than the last, for the Chalybes were the most warlike tribe they had so far met, and fought them hand-to-hand instead of running away from them. They wore cuirasses of thick linen, and kilts of plaited cord; they had also greaves, helmets, and short scimitars at their belts with which

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they cut off their fallen enemies' heads. To frighten the enemy before an attack, they would sing and dance; and their spears were over twenty feet long.

They also had hill-forts, like the Taochi, in which they had stored their food, and from which they would sally after the Greeks had passed and harass their rear. These forts were too well defended for the Greeks to storm them; so they got nothing from that country, but had to live for the whole week on what they had taken from the Taochi.

But at the end of the seven days the Greeks were rid of them, crossing the river Harpasus into the land of the Scythini. They now had four days' easier marching over a plain, till they came to some villages where they rested three days and renewed their supplies of food. Four more days brought them to the first civilised place which they had seen since leaving the Persian plains—to a city, in fact, called Gymnias, both large and wealthy. And here a piece of good fortune was in store for them.

The governor of Gymnias happened to be at war with a neighbouring state, through which the Greeks had to pass; he therefore offered of his own accord to lend them a

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guide; for he was only too pleased to have the chance of turning a marauding army into his enemy's land, without paying them anything. The guide undertook to lead them in five days to a place whence the sea was visible; if he did not, he said, they could put him to death. But the Greeks soon perceived why he had come, when he began inciting them to burn and lay waste the land; it was quite clear that he was there to oblige the governor, and not for any love of the Greeks. However, such a guide was more trustworthy than some of the treacherous tribesmen whom they had formerly used, whatever his motive might be; and on the fifth day, surely enough, he brought them to the place which he had mentioned, a mountain called Theches. Slowly the army wound its way up the long slopes, till the vanguard had topped the ridge. And then a great shout burst from them.

Now the tribesmen whose country they had ravaged had been following them, giving Xenophon and his rear-guard plenty of work to do; and when the rear-guard heard that great shout in front, they feared that some fresh enemy must have assailed them. But as the noise increased, since those who kept running up the hill all swelled the shouting, Xenophon felt sure there must be some

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stronger reason for the uproar than a mere raiders' attack. So he spurred on his horse, and led forward the cavalry to bring help. But soon they could hear the words which the soldiers were shouting:

"THE SEA! THE SEA!"

Then all began to run, and the rear-guard after them; even the baggage-animals were driven up the hill at full speed. And when they were all upon the ridge, and saw the Black Sea glimmer in the distance ahead of them, the men embraced one another and burst into tears. By and by they brought stones, and built a mighty cairn, and set on top of that a trophy of the arms which they had taken from the enemy. Their guide also they rewarded with rich presents—a horse, a silver cup, fine Persian clothes, and gold; but he liked best of all the rings which the Greeks wore on their fingers, so they gave him great store of these as they bade him goodbye.

In all the story of the March, there is no incident more moving than this; it is indeed one of the most famous episodes in ancient history—the moment when the Greek exiles, weary and travel-worn, ran stumbling and cheering to the crest of that hill near Trebizond, shouting: "The sea! The sea!"

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CHAPTER XXX

The rest of the story is soon told, for though most of the army had many adventures yet before they returned to their homes, these adventures were mostly in Greek cities and connected with Greek affairs. The Great March itself, during which that small force of Greeks had defied the full power of the King and passed through the very heart of his realm, ended at Trebizond, a Greek colony on the shore of the Black Sea. Here the whole army rested for a month among friends, and held games, which were a part of the great sacrifice which they had vowed to the gods.

They had been thirteen thousand at the time of the last muster held by Cyrus; now battle, sickness and the cruel cold had reduced them to less than nine thousand. They were among friends for the present, but the greater part of them were still far from their own cities. It would take too long to tell how, the Great March finished, they made their way slowly westward along the shore of the Black Sea, afoot and plundering, since they could not afford to hire ships enough to take them, and seeing famous places, such as Jason's Beach where the first ship was supposed to have come to land, and the site of ancient

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Troy. At one time Xenophon even thought of founding a city in those parts, and settling there ; but the soldiers would not agree.

Xenophon himself had longed to sail straight home to Athens from Trebizond ; but he was too honourable a general to forsake his men, so long as they needed him. In due time, however, the question of his return was solved for him in an unforeseen way. The State of Sparta, which was just then beginning a war against the Greeks' old enemy Tissaphernes, had heard of the famous March and now snatched at the chance to enlist such veteran soldiers. The army was invited to join the Spartan expedition ; and although one would think they might have had enough of campaigning in Persia, their need of a livelihood and the old spirit of adventure were so strong in them, that most of them agreed. This freed Xenophon of the tie which bound him to his men ; he handed over his command to the Spartan leader Thibron, and returned at last to Greece.

Yet his adventure was not quite ended, even now. After all he had undergone, he returned only to be banished from his own city by the Athenians, (who were at this time on good terms with the King) because he had

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taken part in the revolt of Cyrus. He therefore settled at the Spartan colony of Scillus, near Olympia. Before leaving Asia, he had entrusted to the warden of the temple of Artemis at Ephesus, a sum of money from the army's spoil, which had been committed to him that he might make the goddess a thank-offering; for he suspected that he might find danger at Athens, and to entrust the money to the temple-warden was his way of banking it. Soon after Xenophon had settled in Scillus, the warden came to Olympia to see the famous games, and restored the money. So Xenophon bought a piece of land, and at once put into effect a plan which he had made to do the goddess honour.

The great temple of Artemis at Ephesus was one of the Seven Wonders of the World; a river ran past its walls, called the Selinus. Now by a curious chance there was another river Selinus, running through the plot of ground which Xenophon had bought. He built a small shrine on its bank, making the shrine as nearly as possible a copy of the great temple at Ephesus, with a statue of cypress-wood like the gold statue of Artemis there. And here year by year he sacrificed, founding a cult of the goddess which should continue

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after his death. But for many years he was spared to be its priest himself, living to the age of ninety, and composing, among other books, the History of the March of the Ten Thousand. It was a pleasant place for him to spend his old age, with its fruit-trees round it, and its fish in the river, and its hunting-forests near by: and, every year, the reunion of Xenophon's old friends who came for the sacrifice. After his death, a pillar inscribed by him stood near the temple for all comers to read:

"This ground is sacred to Artemis. He who owns and reaps the fruit of it, let him offer his tithe each year, and keep the temple in repair with the rest. For if he fail, the goddess will take note of his negligence."

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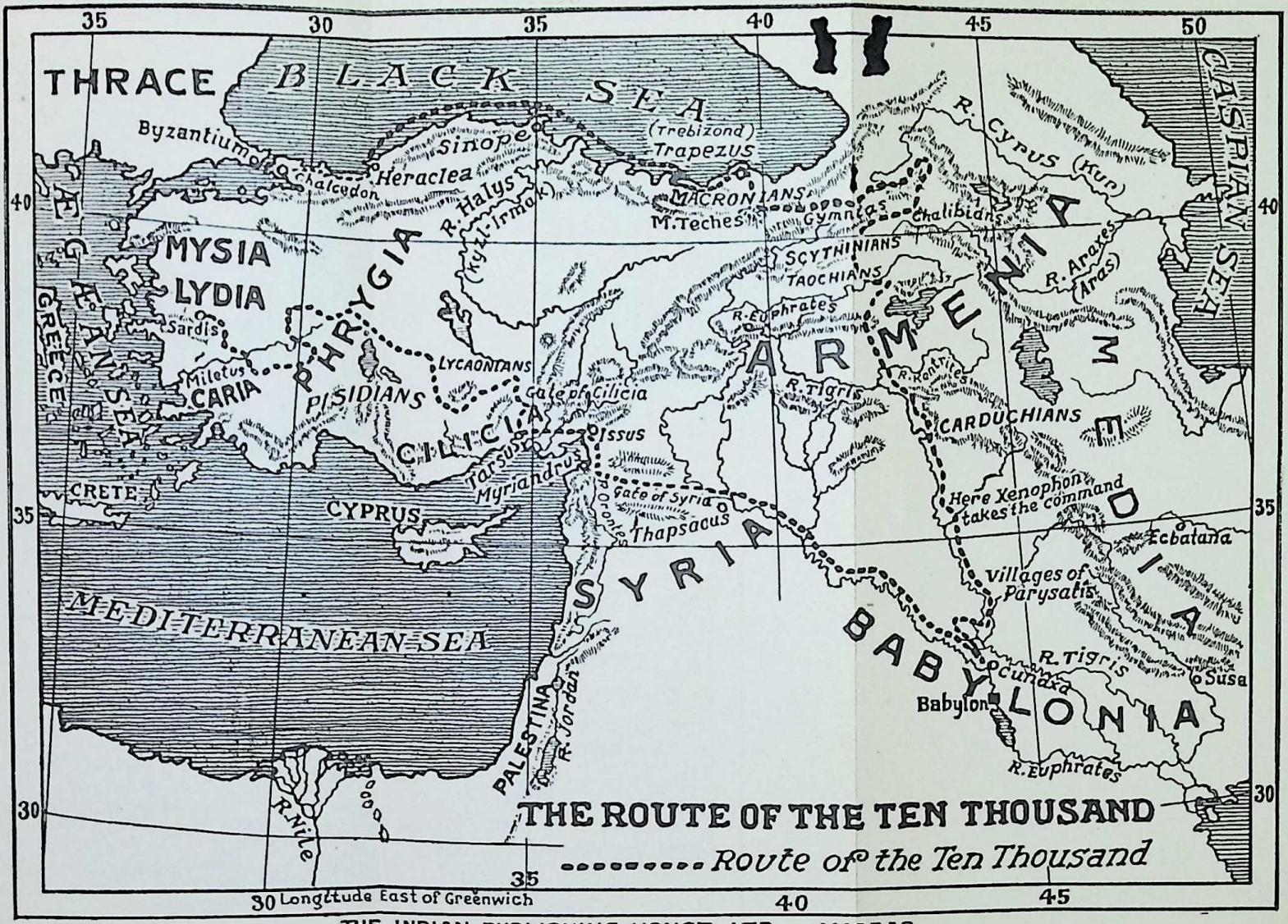

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